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A MAN'S FAMILY

A Satiric Comedy Drama,

in Three Acts.

By MOSES L. and DOROTHY MALEVINSKY.

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ACT I.

A Late Afternoon in June, 1914.

ACT II.

A Morning in August, 1914.

ACT III.

A Morning in September, 1914.

DEC 24 1918

THE CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY FIRST SPEAK.

Sandy McPherson.

An American of Scotch ancestry, 45 years old.

A friend of the Smith family.

Associated with John Smith in many business investments.

Speaks with a decided Scotch accent.

John Smith.

A strong, virile American type.

Scotch-Irish ancestry.

46 years old—wears glasses.

Constant smoker of cigars and pipe, nervous successful lawyer with business interests.

William Smith.

Son of John and Mary Smith, twin brother of Emily—22 years old—dynamic—determined American boy, clean cut, well groomed collegiate, speaks rapidly.

Emily Smith.

William's twin sister—very pretty blonde, up-to-date girl—music in her voice, music in her soul.

Tom Higgins.

William's pal and classmate—similar type—phlegmatic—speaks slowly, easy going—New England drawl—24 years old.

Mary Smith.
Wife of John Smith.
Gentle American mother.

Antonio Martinelli.
Vocal and dramatic coach.

Aunt Polly.
John Smith's elder spinster sister.

Jacques.
A chef—a demonstrator.

Francois.
Assistant to Jacques.

Andrew Robinson.
Confidential secretary to John Smith.

Robert Gilles.
An English gentleman, a bachelor client of John Smith. A widower.

Edward Gilles.
Brother of Robert.

Mrs. Thornton.
A rich widow—handsome—client of John Smith.

Howard Johnstone.
A real estate operator and trader.

Peter Smelzer.
A brewer—fat, rotund and German.

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ACT I.

DISCOVERED:

Living room in John Smith's home, Madison Avenue near 30th Street, New York City, to the rear left, an ornate staircase up—to the right—large individual mantel and fireplace—table in center, ornate bookcases—fine bindings on books—artistic lamps—pictures—rugs—easy chairs—*front, Center, a* cross faced old fashioned settee, several bronze figures.

Sandy.

Lucky dog, John—lucky dog you are.

John.

Come, now, old pal—don't begrudge me.

Sandy.

As if I would.

John.

Hard work all my life—deserves some reward.

Sandy.

Hard work fifty per cent.—good luck fifty per cent. You've been pretty lucky—at least fifty-fifty.

John.

One can't succeed without some luck—if that's the name for it.

Sandy.

Some call it luck—some fate—others accident—one name is as good as another.

John.

It's hard to tell when light ends and darkness begins.

Sandy.

Most things in this world are in the twilight zone.

John.

All of my life—I've had to get down on my knees and pull things out of the ground with my teeth—not much luck in that—that's plain hard work.

Sandy.

I've noticed you generally have things break your way.

John.

To a certain extent we can control our destiny.

Sandy.

Whether we can or not is a serious question—at any rate in the game of life—there's only winning and losing—you win—

John.

No game is won—until its played out.

Sandy.

No man is completely successful or completely happy.

John.

As long as one is on the firing line, one may be shot.

Sandy.

You have little to fear.

John.

There is nothing absolute in the world, everything is relative—it all depends on how we look at things.

Sandy.

You have w e a l t h—peace—honor—family—friends, what else do you want—

John.

I'm not growling.

Sandy.

You'd be a dog if you did.

John.

There are times when I get very tired.

Sandy.

We all do.

John.

I've slaved for years that my wife and children might have comfort and security.

Sandy.

That was your obligation.

John.

I've tried to do my duty too them—they are wonderful—give me sweetest companionship.

Sandy.

Many an hour and day I've passed—in bachelors doldrums—thumping my thumbs.

John.

Lonesome?

Sandy.

As the coral in the sea.

Sandy.

Being a bachelor is worse than being a fish.

John.

To bad.

John.

I miss the analogy.

Sandy.

A bachelor thinks everything covers a hook—the older we grow, the more scary we grow and damned lonesome.

John.

But fish haven't brains to think.

Sandy.

Neither have bachelors—they just swim and bite.

John.

You should have married.

Sandy.

I loved Mary—you married her—some more evidence of your luck.

John.

Find another—there are lots of good women who'd make you happy.

Sandy.

I can't—I've tried.

John.

The roses blossom every spring.

Sandy.

No two blossom alike.

John.

I'll admit Mary is a dainty pink rose—but why not find a full blown red one—its easy to marry, try again.

Sandy.

There's lots of difference between marrying and mating.

John.

Its easy to marry, but hard to mate.

Sandy.

Between marrying and mating runs the gamut of human woe.

John.

That's why most families are in the bankruptcy court.

Sandy.

The average man or woman selects a mate as one would a stocking to slip on or off.

John.

A good marriage never needs washing.

Sandy.

The chemistry of love is beyond understanding.

John.

It is an insoluble concoction.

Sandy.

The odds are I'm doomed to live and die a stupid old bachelor.

John.

My dear old friend.

Sandy.

Its lots of fun to be uncle in every friend's family. Your's has given me lots of happiness.

John.

You're a brick.

(Emily enters running in from the hall.)

Emily.

Hello! Uncle Mc—Dad, here's a telegram from Will.

John.

(Reading:) "Have cut out my Canadian trip—will take it next year—will be home to-night—Bill."

Sandy.

I'll wait and see the boy.

Emily.

I wonder why Will did that—when we left him the other day he was all excitement over this Canadian lark.

John.

Some good reason, William always has a reason for everything—why are you so late Emmy.

Emily.

Cars—blocked—streets blocked—I thought we'd never get through.

Sandy.

In another ten years—New York streets will be impassable.

Emily.

Oh! by then we'll get around in aeroplanes—the air line limited—Dad let's build a landing on our roof. Wouldn't it be fun Uncle Mc—do you know some day we'll be visiting the stars.

Sandy.

Stranger things have happened and may happen.

Emily.

Where's mother?

John.

Upstairs.

Emily.

Call me the minute Will gets here, I'm anxious to see him, I must tell mother the boys are coming home.

(She runs upstairs.)

Sandy.

She's as infectious as a smile.

John.

Great girl—music in her voice—music in her soul.

Sandy.

A bonnie lassie.

John.

I'll give you a confidence, Sandy.

Sandy.

What is it, John?

John.

I'm stumped.

Sandy.

What's the trouble?

John.

As you know—Emily has followed my advice.

Sandy.

Your family always do.

John.

Like William, Emily is ready to be admitted to the bar (chuckling). Emmy and William are alike as two peas but—

Sandy.

But what?

John.

Emily is a woman.

Sandy.

So she is—its a marvelous—wonderful occupation.

John.

That's just the rub—she has accomplished twice as much as William in a way.

Sandy.

How's that?

John.

She has covered and secured a good feminine education, domestic economy—music—singing—paints a little.

Sandy.

Exquisite!

John.

Now she has her law degree.

Sandy.

Bully!

John.

The New York University law school faculty—without exception, tell me she has a natural legal mind—and will make a splendid lawyer.

Sandy.

There you are—the miracle of the ages—the modern woman—composite of the species.

John.

I believe in the modern woman.

Sandy.

Theoretically, yes—practically—well, time will tell.

John.

I've given the subject lots of thought.

Sandy.

Its the most fundamental and far reaching problem in the world of to-day.

John.

Unmistakably.

Sandy.

Soon there'll be no old fashioned girls.

John.

It may be for the best—nobody really knows.

Sandy.

I have a memory—a very fond one—that somehow or other—just makes me lean to—the old fashioned girl—once I was sick unto death—I'll never forget the moment—as long as I live—*the touch of my mother's hand healed me.* Motherhood is the greatest ministry—*isn't it woman's true mission?*

John.

How's your pipe—Sandy—here's a new smoke, try this.

Sandy.

No, thanks, I like the old flame best.

John.

I can't say—that we differ much about it—I have serious misgivings.

Sandy.

Every thinking man has.

John.

Nevertheless, I want to see woman given a man's chance. She's never had it—and she's entitled to it.

Sandy.

Every man would favor it—if it could be done without impairing the foundation of society.

John.

I made up my mind to give Emily and John—a fifty-fifty break.

Sandy.

The new woman is as old as the hills—she's a man. I have my doubts if one can be masculine and feminine in *one* life—it might be—

John.

No matter what the outcome—the world has made up its mind to give its women an equal run.

Sandy.

No matter where they run to—or what they run into.

John.

If you'll have it that way, yes—they'll make good in the end, that's my faith, in any event.

Sandy.

God bless our women—I love them all—I'm glad though in a way I haven't your problem to worry about—guess I'll stick to my own beast of burden.

John.

The boys and girls in our office are sparking with electricity, all excited over the entry of William and Mary in our firm.

Sandy.

Naturally.

John.

William's a great boy, Sandy—a born orator—he will be wonderful in jury cases—personality and individuality ooze out of every pore, ever hear him speak?

Sandy.

No, I think not.

John.

Harvard has done marvelous things for William—I'd hardly recognize him for my own boy.

Sandy.

You never had the advantage of a Harvard education?

John.

No.

Sandy.

Yet you've succeeded.

John.

That's true—but I've missed it an awful lot—a great deal more than you think—a good and finished education is invaluable.

Sandy.

Doubtless it has marked value—there are two sides to the argument—it depends on the character of the education—and more often on the *educatee*—practical experience and horse sense beats book lore.

John.

There is no compensation equal to giving your children a college education—the discipline—the larger outlook, the companionship is incomparable.

Sandy.

I haven't any children—never expect to have any, but if I had, I'd give them just what your parents gave you—

John.

(Reflectively.) Ah!

Sandy.

Sink or swim—that's the only lifeline any normal man or woman needs—anyone give you anything else.

John.

Hey diddle dee—when I landed in little old New York, my—I remember the day—the hour—the sky—every cloud.

Sandy.

Crossing on the dinky little ferry.

John.

Yes, I did—did you—come that way—all the education I had was studying the dictionary.

Sandy.

No man ever forgets the day—he landed in New York its *the* epoch—of one's life—did you have any money?

John.

Seventeen dollars and fifteen cents—oh! yes—I had something else.

Sandy.

A satchel of clothes of course.

John.

A few clothes of course—but I was thinking of a red apple I had in my pocket—I lived on apples for three months.

Sandy.

Did you know anybody in New York—have any friends?

John.

Not a soul—I was green and gruelly—I was a rube alright—I had tons of dam fool nerve—based on ignorance—most of it at that—green—why I was so green that for a long time I labored under the impression that a poor man wasn't allowed to walk on Fifth Avenue—can you beat it?

Sandy.

There are a million of our kind in New York.

John.

Have some tobacco.

Sandy.

Thanks, I'll stick to this—its mild—

John.

What a strange journey life is—we dream and dream.

Sandy.

I build a castle in the air every day.

John.

I'm thinking how to please William and Emily.

Sandy.

A father's past-time—I suppose.

John.

What's your judgment—would you have the firm name read Smith and Smith—Lawyers—or John —William and Emily Smith or—

Sandy.

Why not—Emily—William and John Smith.

John.

Ah! you're teasing me—old friend, you're teasing me.

Sandy.

Don't be foolish, man.

John.

No, I'm serious.

Sandy.

I know.

John.

I've watched over my boy and girl—I've advised and guided them—we are pals—they are good children.

Sandy.

That's a blessing.

John.

If I have the power and ability—it is my purpose to save them the experience of my struggles and hardships.

Sandy.

Bear in mind—the hard knocks that polished your corners will never smooth theirs.

John.

I do not think it essential that one be scarred in order to learn life—I want to spare them my sorrows.

Sandy.

Your children must have the same common points of contact—we all do—its the law of life.

John.

I'll save them a lot—they have been my companions and confidants—they are better lawyers today than I am—their training has been scientific and methodical—they have the fundamental principles and verities ingrained in their very being—not many children have had as much thought and care given them.

Sandy.

I hope you won't be disappointed—you are cooking your children's broth—it smells good—it may taste good, to you and you know the mixture—the point is, how will it go with them, will they know the ingredients—or how the thing is made.

John.

Of course they will.

Sandy.

You may think so.

John.

I know it.

Sandy.

Do you think you can satisfy my appetite telling me the good things you've had for your dinner.

John.

William and Emily are not ordinary children—I've reasoned with them, always, and I am sure they understand.

Sandy.

Take for granted the literal truth of all that—every wayfarer must learn his own road—

John.

Signs help—they will have lots of hard work—plenty of experience.

Sandy.

That may be—you have a big practice.

John.

We'll have lots of fun—we'll work together—and then just think—I'll live my life over again with my children.

Sandy.

There's the danger John—their life is just beginning—your's—well, its not exactly ending—

John.

I hope not.

Sandy.

Nevertheless, they are coming—you are going—I think that is why parents and children have so many differences, they aren't traveling exactly the same way.

John.

Don't you think I can show them how to win?

Sandy.

Did you let your parents show you—I didn't—children never do.

John.

But I was raised in the old fashioned way—the big stick—no confidence and very little reasoning.

Sandy.

You are using the new method.

John.

Yes.

Sandy.

I wish you luck.

John.

I believe in reasoning with young folks—showing them how to avoid the snares and pitfalls of life. It isn't likely that a boy or girl of twenty-one should know or understand very much about the game of life.

Sandy.

Boys and girls of seventy know very little more.

John.

Age does bring some wisdom—its all wrong to tell the young boy and girl—the world is full of ghosts—lookout they'll catch you—its far better to take our children by the hand and help them, fight through the age old trail—

Sandy.

If they have you always—at hand to lean on—what is their decision worth—what is there for them to do.

John.

Everything—I'll be neither Judge or taskmaster.

Sandy.

Doubtless you planned their birth.

John.

I—we did.

Sandy.

Their education.

John.

I did.

Sandy.

Their vocation.

John.

I did.

Sandy.

Their associations.

John.

Advised them wholesomely.

Sandy.

You're the damdest tyrant of a father—any family ever had.

John.

That's not so—I hate tyrannical parents.

Sandy.

You do.

John.

My parents were very tyrannical.

Sandy.

You rebelled?

John.

That's why I ran away from home.

Sandy.

Isn't that a warning to you?

John.

That's why I have taught my children independence from babyhood up.

Sandy.

Peculiar freedom you give them.

John.

They live their own lives.

Sandy.

According to your plans?

John.

Not at all—I may advise but never interfere—their lives their own to make or mar.

Sandy.

It is well—for you to realize that.

John.

I've helped, not hurt them.

Sandy.

Most helping hurts.

John.

If my boy and girl didn't understand, it would hurt us all—my children know my mind and heart, they see my purpose and appreciate my spirit.

Sandy.

Every parent thinks that.

(Enter in great excitement William and Tom—they are loaded down with suit cases—light overcoats—leather, top hat boxes, golf sticks and bags—dropping all in exhaustion.)

William and Tom.

Hello! Hello!

Sandy.

For the love of Annie Laurie.

John.

My boy—upon my soul—(embracing).

William.

Well—Uncle Mc, how are you—you know my pal Tom Higgins, of course you do.

Sandy.

Sure. I know Tom.

Tom.

I'm glad to see you again, Mr. McPherson.

William.

Dear old Dad—gee home is comfy—feels good —where's mother—where's sis—how's everybody —how's everything?

John.

Everything and everybody is tip-top—mother and Emily are upstairs anxiously awaiting you—mother—Emily—

William.

No—we'll go up—got to wash up anyway.

John.

Have a good trip.

William.

Terribly dusty—I'm covered with cinders—come on Tom (they gather belongings)—I've got to have a heart to heart talk with you Dad—

John.

We'll have lots of heart to heart talks.

William.

Tom and I have a great idea—monumental—colossal—regular standard oil conception—you know how Columbus made an egg stand on end—well its just as simple—Gallileo proved that the world was round—didn't he—our problem is just as unerringly certain—the proposition is just as radiatingly pulsating and world illuminating as

Edison's incandescent bulb, Marconi's wireless can't go any faster—when once we get going, come on Tom, let's clean up—we'll hurry, Dad—my—my, its great to be home (they go upstairs).

Sandy.

Phew! that chap's dynamic—almost took my breath away. He ought to make a great lawyer.

John.

You bet he will—I wonder what's in his mind.

Sandy.

The enthusiasm of youth.

John.

Won't our old office hum—it needs new life and blood anyway.

Sandy.

Modern times demand new ideas and methods.

John.

I'll let 'em go the limit.

Sandy.

Its always seemed to me, lawyers were blamed slow and complicated.

John.

Conservative.

Sandy.

Cobwebby—cobwebby—blamed cobwebby.

John.

Regularity and precision are essential.

Mary.

(Voice heard upstairs.) Hurry, boys, you'll find everything laid out for you in your room (she enters). Oh! John dear, I'm in trouble.

John.

What's up?

Mary.

I've been going over my accounts with Emily—I've made an awful blunder.

John.

How?

Mary.

Drawn too many checks—haven't enough in bank to pay them.

John.

How much are you short?

Mary.

Four hundred and twenty-five dollars and fifteen cents—I don't know how I miscalculated.

John.

Oh! Mary—why is it—you women always over-calculate or undercalculate—whether it is going out or coming in—well, dear, what do you want me to do?

Mary.

Let me have an extra check for four hundred and fifty dollars—if you will please—I'll have to get it deposited the first thing to-morrow morning—else my checks may not be paid.

John.

Your bank wouldn't throw your check out.

Mary.

They have done so.

John.

Is this a habit—overdrawing?

Mary.

Not at all—only lately everything seems to be getting so high—it seems as if I am always short of money.

John.

(Writing check good naturedly.) Once they sang the song of the *shirt,* then it was Stiche! Stiche! Stiche!—now its the song of the *check* Write! Write! Write! (chuckling with laughter).

Sandy.

Money is such a good thread—mends so many tares and tears—knits so many socks and souls.

Mary.

Mr. McPherson—do you think there are many men who would make as good a husband as John.

Sandy.

Oh! there must be—at least *one.*

John.

A good wife deserves a good husband.

Sandy.

Not many get what they deserve.

John.

A woman is pretty much what a man makes her.

Mary.

A man is what a woman makes him—a cowardly woman or a wicked woman can destroy a man—a

brave woman and a good woman draws the fire of a man's soul.

Sandy.

It is evident that each of you know the part that you have played in molding the other.

Mary (to John).

I wonder what he means.

John.

Ask him.

Mary.

I think I'll not be too inquisitive.

John.

I shan't—I might regret it.

(Enter William and Tom.)

Tom.

Mrs. Smith, you are always so good to me—thanks for the fixings—

Mary.

Don't mention it.

Tom.

Isn't New York bully—I'd like to live here.

William.

New York is a disease—everybody has it.

Sandy.

So they say.

John.

Do you blame them for the infection?

Tom.

New York is heaven—New Yorkers are heavenly—even the buildings are heavenly—if old John Ruskin was alive, he'd have to add a few stories to his books.

William.

If you spring anything like that again, I'll report you to the police.

Sandy.

That might go in Boston—but not in New York.

Tom.

Little old New York—here's to New York—gem of the earth, land of adoption—not of birth—for good or ill—I'll love her still—I'll love her still.

John.

Everybody sings it—

Sandy.

Those who do not sing—sigh.

John.

Well, William, out with it—what's up?

Sandy.

What *is* the *new idea?*

William.

(Non-plussed how to proceed.) Dad, I'm nervous—can't you see I'm nervous?

John.

Are you in trouble—anything the matter?

William.

I'm like the fellow about to propose—I've memorized my speech—I'm ready to drop on my knees —but I can't get the darned thing out.

Tom.

Its like this, Mr. Smith—Bill fears—you will say nothing doing—I'll be a brother to you—something like that—I'm in love with another fellow—you see Bill's about to make a proposal to you.

Sandy.

For the love of Annie Laurie what's it all about —what's up?

John.

I hope you aren't involved—with a girl—you aren't in love—are you—is that it—

Tom.

Oh! Lord! No—I wish he was—he'd have more sympathy for me.

John.

Well, dam it—what is it—let's have it.

Mary.

Willie, you haven't done anything wrong, have you?

William.

I'M GIVING UP THE LAW.

John.

The hell you say—oh! forgive me—I beg pardon.

William.

There's no money in it.

Tom.

Money is power.

John.

What has money got to do with it—

Mary.

This can't be true—surely you are jesting.

William.

You must hear me before you judge me. I've come to hate the law—the boys say I'm an idealistic anarchist—whatever that may be—I guess I'm that —I don't know exactly what I am—I don't think anyone—man, woman, child or dog—knows exactly what he, she or it, may be, we are what we are—necessity, environment, hunger, if you please, makes us one thing to-day and another to-morrow —I despise the civil law—with all its dialectic shading—so that one with a sanctimonious countenance may rob Peter to pay Paul—I detest the social law, the vilest and most inequitable of all laws—a law that demands the ostracism of a clean, decent human being because his father's father, who was the son of a father, selected the wrong religious chain of father's. Criminals are made by the criminal law—cheated of his birthright, the poor devil is hounded by the well fed dogs that happen to be born in a so-called thorough bred kennel—instead of first seeing the light of day in gloom and penury—there isn't any *moral law, no man's morals* dare be x-rayed—if you did, heaven would be moved to hell—and chaos would come again, moral law is the fig leaf of ancestry and the soothing syrup of posterity; and what are your religious laws but a jumble of superstitious formulas —designed and intended to chase the gobelins of fear and doubt—what is religion but love—and

love laughs at locksmiths; your average minister wants to lock laughter out of life. The law, all law is part of a never ending grinding machine—with cocks, and stops, and guards, with chains and brakes and wheels, with belts and bolts and screws, with nuts and treads and gears—interminable—all propelled by power, generated from a furnace—fed by the blood of men—the souls of women. Its all make-believe—artificial—hypocritical, unmoral, immoral, unscientific, impracticable, improbable, inhuman. Holy smoke its the worst job ever. There isn't a red blooded, full hearted, decent spirited thing in it—I hate it, God only knows how I hate it—I want to make *money,* a lot of money, heaps of money, mountains of money, millions of money, billions of money, I tell you I want money, money is power, and when I get power, I'm going to change a lot of things in this darned old world. Some day, in some way, somebody is going to explode something. It may be me, somebody always has. Its about time for somebody to explode something, *change things,* you bet I'd change things. The workman would have his meat. Is not the laborer worthy of his hire, shall the poor always cry for bread and raiment, why should the starving babe waste and fade for lack of milk, why should the mother fountain dry? I tell you its all wrong, someone besides the birds should have nests, someone besides the foxes should have holes. How long shall the weary sons of men, toil slavishly in their unrequieted sweat, the law—I'll have none of it—

Mary.

Come to think of it, this is a *funny* world.

Sandy.

Men may come, and men may go, but hell goes on forever.

John.

William, do you realize, have you stopped to think, you are breaking all my plans, our plans.

William.

Dear old Dad, we'll can the plans, pickle them, salt them, put 'em in cold storage, any old thing, I'm not going to be a lawyer.

Sandy.

My boy you are suffering from idealistic mania, the world is impregnated with it.

Mary.

Willie, what are you going to do?

William.

Business, going into business.

Tom.

We have a perfectly corking idea.

John.

Your brains are not big enough to contain an idea, a simple idea, in your head, would be choked to death for want of room.

William.

Now, see here Dad, be reasonable, don't get sore.

Tom.

Don't get sore, Mr. Smith, you'll regret it, listen to Bill.

William.

It doesn't pay to lose one's head, you've always preached independence to me, dig my own foundation, saw my own logs, weather my own boards,

nail my own shingles, build my own house, paint my own blinds, patch my own fences, you started adaging, symbolizing and epigramming me when I was six years old. I'm not going to be just a figure of speech all of my life—life is action, I propose making an impress on my age and time, and this is a commercial not a legal age. Statecraft is in the discard, and the law is lonesome.

John.

But you have the makings of a famous lawyer, you have an opportunity of becoming the leader of the greatest bar in the world, who knows, does honor mean nothing to you, are you going to throw it all to the winds?

William.

All every bit, no splitting hairs for me, drawing a distinction between tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee, bowing and scraping to Courts and juries, gambling my life, spirit and soul, against the red and black of the judicial roulette wheel, struggling with the ingratitude of clients, willing to have you commit any crime, just so they win—

John.

When did you get all of this knowledge of the sorrows of the law.

William.

From you dear old Dad, listening to you for 20 years, I've heard every word you said—and then Harvard is some school, Boston, is almost as wicked as New York—I tell you I want money—

John.

Its all right to want it—getting it is another problem.

Tom.

You know, money is a bird.

John.

Often, a dirty bird.

Tom.

Lays golden eggs.

John.

In a foul nest.

Tom.

All the boys, young and old, are robbing the nest.

William.

The girls too, mothers, daughters, wives, sisters, sweethearts, even old maids, kinsfolks to nobody.

Tom.

You can't do anything without money, can't go anywhere, can't have anything.

John.

I don't want to be mean or stubborn—but—

Mary.

You couldn't be mean if you tried.

John.

If all of this wasn't so tragical, it would be rollicking good comedy.

Sandy.

Forget the tragedy, enjoy the comedy.

John.

Let's get down to facts, Point one, a lot of money —everybody wants a lot—Point two, how to use

it, difficult, very difficult, nobody knows how, a lot of folks have tried, all failed.

William.

One thing, you can bet your last marble on—I'll not lay foundations or build libraries, I have very fixed and definite intentions.

Sandy.

Most young people have.

Tom.

Mr Mc, have you any grudge against young folks.

Sandy.

No, indeed, Tom, none whatever.

William.

I'm going to dedicate my life to the under-dog, fighting for the right, out in the open, on the level, before the whole world, for and with my fellow-men, for truth and justice for all.

Sandy.

To much college John, I think I'll be going.

John.

Please don't go, I need you my friend.

Sandy.

Steady man, don't slip, they say it happens in every man's family.

John.

In the name of all, we love, what is the idea?

Mary.

What are you going to do, Willie?

Sandy.

What is the business that's going to produce this never ending stream of gold, William?

John.

That is Point three, should be Point one, we have to make money before we give it away, what kind of a business have you found that produces money like magic.

Mary.

You overlooked that Willie.

Tom.

Its a sure thing.

William.

It can't lose.

Sandy.

What is it, gold bricks or green goods.

John.

Its hell, just plain unadulterated hell.

William.

No, pork and beans.

Mary.

Pork and beans.

Tom.

Yes, pork and beans.

Sandy.

Pork and beans, going to compete with the meat trust.

John.

Well, I'll be d—d—d—d—d—d—d—d—I don't know what I'll be.

William.

Be sane and sober, dad! keep your poise, your hand on the mark, your finger on the trigger, here's the thought, the idea, its wonderful, Tom thinks its wonderful.

Tom.

Most wonderful.

William.

I know it—the whole world will know it, because its seasoned, seasoned pork and beans, you know the trouble with everybody in the world, they lack *Pep,* Big Black Capital Letters, P. E. P., that's what we are going to do, put lots of pepper in it, make it bark, and snap, and bite.

Mary.

But why this kind of business, Willie, its rather common, isn't it, pork and beans.

William.

Its symbolic, psychological, swine to swine, the dirtiest humblest of animals, properly dressed, salted, peppered, lots of pepper, seasoned, food for a king, don't you know that the only honest to God difference between a swine and a king is in the *dressing,* seasoning, trimmings.

John.

You're crazy.

William.

No! sirree, I'm not crazy, I'm starting from a simple principle and I can prove the correctness

of my principle, the principle of scientific salesmanship, was Gallileo crazy when he discovered that the world was round, everybody said he was crazy, yet it was a simple problem to him to prove that the earth wasn't flat, Newton's principle of gravitation started from a simple thought, that anybody with any sense ought to have had, quantity production, mass salesmanship, everybody wants it, wants what, wants it seasoned, there isn't any fun in living if your life has lost its pep, why do people like candy, because its sweet tickles your palate, girls like pickles, because girls are sweet and pickles are sour, creates diversion, most people like pie, because of the filling, *make a thing tasty enough* and the world is yours.

John.

And for *this* I sent you to Harvard.

Sandy.

Steady man, steady.

Mary.

Father, don't get angry at Willie.

William.

Now for business, we must form our corporation to-morrow, we've no time to lose, name, "Seasoned Pork and Beans, Inc.," charter perpetual.

Sandy.

Pork and beans forever—is that it?

William.

Capital authorized ten million dollars, paid in ten thousand dollars, directors for the first year, John Smith, Sandy McPherson, Tom Higgins, William Smith. I will be President and Treasurer,

Tom will be Vice-President and Secretary, I have been corresponding with the agents, and have agreed to lease 200 Chambers Street, it is a good location for our initial plant in a very short while we will need a number of branch locations. I have arranged to sign the lease at your office to-morrow, Dad, they want you to guarantee it, Dad, trust me, I'll make good. Let me have your check to-night for the ten thousand, Dad, we've got to cover the paid in capital, I'll give you my personal note, with Tom's endorsement for the loan, I want to sleep sound to-night, I will sleep sound with our paid up capital in hand, Dad, I know you love me, I know you would go to hell for me, I know I've got to deliver the goods for you and mother.

JOHN.

(Takes out check book and starts writing, no one says a word, all standing by, John gives check to William, who reads it to the company.)

WILLIAM.

New York, June 15th, 1914.

Pay to Seasoned Pork and Beans, Inc., Ten Thousand Dollars, $10,000.00.

To Stuyvesant Natl. Bk., New York.

JOHN SMITH.

William.

(Continuing) Now, let's hold the first stockholders' meeting in my room, we'll elect directors, and officers—it will give the President a chance to unfold some of the companies plans, how we propose to make the wheels go round.

Sandy.

All right Mr. President (exit John, Sandy, Tom and William).

Mary.

(Tidying things in room.)

Men are strange creatures, if things happened to me that way, John would say I overcalculate or undercalculate, of course, according to men, women never figure things out just right (enter Emily).

Emily.

What's the matter, where is Will?

Mary.

Upstairs.

Emily.

What's up, anything wrong, you look worried.

Mary.

Be careful, don't intrude, your father will likely tell you.

Emily.

Where is father, I have something very important to tell him.

Mary.

Your father is with Mr. Mc and the boys, what do you want to tell him?

Emily.

Did Tony telephone, he ought to be here by now.

Mary.

I have had no message.

(The bell rings.)

Emily.

That may be him now (goes to door).

(John and Sandy enter from the stairway.)

John.

You see I can't afford to buck him.

William.

(Appearing on the stairway.)

I thought you were coming up.

John.

We'll be up in a minute.

William.

(Disappearing) Don't make us wait to long.

Sandy.

I'm afraid you'll lose a lot of time and money on this venture.

John.

Perhaps, we can't tell, its a crisis in William's life, if I fight him, we are side-tracked, he may get ditched. On the other hand, the proposition may win, its a novel idea, William's quite a philosopher, the thing's plausible, you must concede, and there's a good deal of truth in that iconoclastic tirade he delivered, although it will never do to admit it.

Sandy.

I should say not, there's a grain of truth in every false idea.

John.

There's more than a grain of truth in some of the things William said, but he has me badly worried, its a pretty hard blow.

Mary.

Don't worry dear, Willie is just like you, dear, I've always said so, most of Willie's ideas come

from you anyway. I've heard you say a lot of those things.

(Emily and Tony enter.)

Emily.

Oh! father.

Tony.

It ees wonderful (to the group), good afternoon.

Emily.

I wonder if they will like it.

Mary.

Glad to see you Mr. Martinelli.

Sandy.

How are you Martinelli?

Emily.

Tony has the completed manuscript of our play.

Tony.

Your divine work Miss Emily.

John.

What's that?

Emily.

Yes! the work is complete.

Tony.

Miss Emily is one genius.

Emily.

Now, Tony! no time for that.

Tony.

Ze ees one great genius.

John.

What's this! what's this!

Mary.

You say a play.

Emily.

Tony and I have been working on it secretly for over a year.

Tony.

I did nothing, nothing.

Emily.

Yes! you did.

Tony.

Maybe a word here, a word there, maybe one leetle touch, it ees Miss Emily's, zee ees a marvel.

John.

Is this another loose hinge—rickety, rickety, rick.

Sandy.

Steady man, steady.

Emily.

You see, father, I came to the realization.

Tony.

Ze ees inspired, what the bible say omniscient, ze sees everything.

John.

What is this all about anyway.

Mary.

You couldn't write a real play.

Emily.

A woman hasn't any business practicing law, its a man's job anyway, a woman is temperamentally unfit to be a lawyer.

Tony.

Miss Emily's talent is for ze stage, ze write, ze play, ze act, ze ees magnificient.

John.

Stop this, STOP THIS I SAY.

Emily.

No, father, it can't be stopped, you have a splendid lawyer in Will, I'd be in the way, I'd ruin the combination, I've made up my mind not to follow the law.

John.

Can you beat it, now what's your reason?

Emily.

As I see it, a law suit is a play, the trouble about it is as a rule, the stage is all set, the lines are all written when the lawyer gets it, its ready made, generally the actors in a law suit have missed their cue, ruined the play, they come to a lawyer for patch work, he has little chance to create anything, I want to fashion my own law suits, build my own plays, I'd like to shape my life along original lines, I don't want a hum-drum existence.

John.

What leads you to believe that you can become a successful playwright.

Emily.

Possibly my exaggerated imagination.

Sandy.

Every person in the world thinks they can write plays, even the grave-diggers, they at least have a plot to start with.

Emily.

Its the most attractive profession in the world of to-day.

John.

In what way?

Emily.

It embraces the widest opportunities, one has the whole world to play too, and the whole world to play with.

Tony.

Miss Emily, zee is sublime.

John.

I must have committed some awful *sin* at some time in my life.

Sandy.

Have you a producer, has your play been accepted?

Emily.

Tony is going to make the production.

Sandy.

It takes a lot of money.

Emily.

Only eight thousand dollars, we have all the estimates.

Tony.

It ees not much.

Sandy.

Have you got it?

Tony.

It ees not much.

Sandy.

Eight thousand dollars is a fortune, if you haven't the first eight.

EMILY.

Father, dear, we only need three thousand now to cover the preliminary payments, we will not need the balance until August, the *play goes on in August.* I feel sure you will back me, won't you, father, dear.

Mary.

Why not have a regular theatrical manager make the production and furnish the money, they do furnish the money sometimes, don't they.

Emily.

We have tried them all.

Tony.

Zay no appreciate ze play.

Emily.

Not one would undertake it.

Sandy.

Doesn't that deter you?

Emily.

Not a bit, why should it?

Mary.

It would make me hesitate.

John.

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread, what's the thing about?

Emily.

"The Bridge of Tolls."

Tony.

Miss Emily, ah! zee is one glorious angel.

John.

I think I'm on the bridge of tolls.

Emily.

Every one must cross that bridge.

John.

The thing that's worrying me is how am I ever going to get off of it?

Emily.

That's the theme of my play life is a Bridge of Tolls, one pays the toll as long as one lives.

Sandy.

We all know that, why not tell us how to make it a free bridge?

Emily.

That's the argument of the play, it shows that we never get any happiness in life unless we pay and serve—

Sandy.

You mean that we wouldn't have any fun on the bridge if it was a free road.

Emily.

We wouldn't appreciate our blessings if they were free, but the main point is that every one *pays* whether one wants to or not.

Sandy.

But some ride whilst most folks walk.

Emily.

There are more heartaches in motorcars than in shoe leather.

Sandy.

That may be, but most everybody has a make of a car picked out.

Emily.

Whether we ride or walk, the true philosophy is to be resigned to the "chastened acceptance of the inevitable."

JOHN.

The chastened acceptance of the inevitable, when I ran away from home, my *mother* used those very words, as her parting admonition.

Sandy.

That's very odd.

(William and Tom enter finding all present sitting or standing as in a reverie.)

William.

Why have you kept the *Board* of Directors waiting?

Tom.

This is the end of a perfect day, oh! Miss Emily, we, I am going to live in New York.

Tony.

The *play* will open in New York.

William.

It isn't a play Antonio Martinelli, its regular bona fide business, seasoned, thoroughly seasoned.

Tony.

You wrong your sister, it ees a play—art, very artistic.

Tom.

If you want to sell a thing, season it.

Tony.

What you mean season it?

(Enter Aunt Polly.)

Polly.

Hello! everybody, how's everybody?

William.

Hello! Aunt Polly, how are the Armenians, are you still feeding the babies?

Tom.

How's Aunt Polly?

Polly.

I've had a most wonderful visit with Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab.

Tom.

Who is Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab?

POLLY.

Who is Micah?

Tom.

Never heard of him, is he a New Yorker?

Polly.

You don't know Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab, Indian astrologist extraordinary to his majesty King George, soothsayer and forecaster to New York's mystic inner circle.

Tom.

Never met Mr. Micah.

Polly.

Wizard of the stars, who tells you what to do, and what not to do, Micah who co-ordinates your investments, your activities, and your frailties with Saturn, Mars and Venus.

Tom.

Who is the guy, how did you meet him, Aunt Polly?

Polly.

Why, my dear, through the Red Cross, the Red Cross is the magic wand, that brings into communion and sympathetic touch, the proletariat, the bourgeose and nobility, even Royalty, a millionaire's daughter confided the secret to me. I taught her how to knit baby *hosiery,* and she introduced me to Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab.

Tom.

Does she live in New York, too, what's her name?

Polly.

Gladys Sturtevant Van Sturtevant, Gladys is a likely and a beautiful child, there's only one child in the Sturtevant Van Sturtevant family, Gladys says that her mother says that's the limit. With the bourgeouse, another baby would have shocked their circle of refinement.

Tom.

Is that so?

Polly.

Oh! yes, they belong to the Ne Plus Ultras, you don't know the Ne Plus Ultras, the regular pate

de foi gras of New York, the very high livers, Gladys' father makes all of his money and they say he has more ten thousand-dollar bills in his pocket than any man in the world, studying the stars with Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab, Gladys' says her father has so much money, that society just loves her mother, I can't explain it all exactly—just exactly how its done, but a certain star has to be in a certain place at a certain time, for Gladys' father to buy or sell a certain stock. You see long before you were born, oh, thousands of years, you were put in a certain astrological orbit, Gladys' says she knows her father was put into the financial orbit, I see his name in the papers all the time, they say he's a wonderful financier, but Gladys says to me confidentially, she knows her father, and she knows its Micah and the stars that make her father wonderful, she says Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab is the original hitch your wagon to a star, Micah took my astrological, orbitical curve today, and he says that something terrible is about to happen.

John.

It has happened.

Polly.

No, its going to happen.

Tom.

I wonder if Micah can figure out the astrological orbit of pork and beans (to Polly), won't you introduce me to Micah.

Polly.

I will if you join the Red Cross, the way to my heart is through the Red Cross, I won't do anything for anybody who won't help the Red Cross.

Tom.

What do you want me to do?

Polly.

Become a unit.

Tom.

What's a unit?

Polly.

Fifty dollars.

Tom.

I'm it, when *may* I meet Micah (counts out 50 $1 bills).

Polly.

To-morrow, Oh! brother John, won't you be a unit? You ought to meet Micah, I've always said so.

John.

(Handing her fifty dollars.) *The chastened acceptance of the inevitable.*

(Slow curtain.)

ACT II.

Office of "Seasoned Pork and Beans, Inc.," 200 Chambers Street, New York City, one flight up.

A morning in August, 1914.

The office is stage width—20 or 25 feet deep.

Doors—Left entrance from elevator.

Center to plant.

Right to private inner office.

There are several rugs on the floor, the outlook is prosperous, chairs, flat top desk, large leather lounge, several lithographs hanging, advertising products, there are two large highly polished nickel coffee boilers, an ornate buffet table also a very large highly polished nickel perambulator, a la knickerbocker.

The curtain rises upon empty scene, after a moment, *Jacques* enters wearing fautless white uniform, looks over and prepares coffee boilers, finally lighting same, is looking over and moving perambulator when John and Sandy enter.

John.

What time does this exhibition take place?

Jacques.

My pay is ten to twelve.

Sandy.

My good man, what has your pay got to do with it?

Jacques.

(Starts moving perambulator.) So many pay, so many beans, no pay, no beans, I work so very hard, rich men, rich men's sons get all, everything, poor man, he get, what you call faith, hope, charity, he never get ze money.

John.

Two hours a day, humph, hard work, he calls it, what are people thinking about, I work ten to twelve hours a day, every day, always have, all my life.

Sandy.

A man who is unwilling to work eight hours a day doesn't deserve to live.

John.

I don't understand it, what is the world coming to?

Sandy.

Socialistic madness.

John.

I believe in socialism, but working two hours a day isn't socialism.

Sandy.

That's about what the majority of people clamoring for it think it is.

John.

Divide*ism* is a better name for it, its corrupt and fanatic leaders telling the masses to take it all.

Sandy.

It will end in famine for all, no one will have any incentive to work, if the fruit of one's labor is taken and divided with the drone.

John.

We are all badly spoilt nowadays.

Sandy.

Yes, all classes, badly pampered and overfed to my way of thinking, the world is about due for a lot of punishment.

John.

Have you heard of the complications downtown, things are at a standstill and trouble is in the air.

Sandy.

I expect it, it is bound to come.

John.

The Stuvesant Natl. Bank sent for me yesterday.

Sandy.

What did they want?

John.

Warned us to be on our guard.

Sandy.

When is their note due?

John.

Next month.

Sandy.

They want it paid.

John.

Reduced and more security.

Sandy.

There are ugly rumors around town.

John.

Very bad.

Sandy.

The stock market went to pieces this morning.

John.

This business is going to need a good big bit of money.

Sandy.

I warned you, but you wouldn't listen to me.

John.

I am trying to raise some to-day, Andrew is downtown now.

Sandy.

Have you heard from the Trans-Continental National?

John.

That's a tough bank, they said our hundred thousand was more than we should have had.

Sandy.

They have our double endorsement.

John.

I also gave them my steel preferred.

Sandy.

I'm sorry this venture is hurting my credit.

John.

I hope not, I succeeded yesterday in getting the Thompson boys to take fifty thousand dollars preferred stock at par.

Sandy.

Any bonus.

John.

One of common for every two preferred, I think I can make the same deal with the Gillis'—you know they have millions idle.

Sandy.

They are foxy Englishmen, how much have we sold all told?

John.

Three hundred thousand common and two hundred thousand preferred.

Sandy.

Great guns! where is all that money?

John.

The boys have undoubtedly overbought.

Sandy.

What do you mean?

John.

Their committments are very heavy.

Sandy.

This is a tough time to be overloaded.

John.

They are carrying a tremendous lot of meat and beans. I'm badly worried.

Sandy.

Do you know the exact status of their affairs?

John.

I do not.

Sandy.

Why not?

John.

I can't evidence distrust of my boy, that would never do.

Sandy.

My dear man, the war creates a situation that must change every point of view.

John.

I know.

Sandy.

The time for illusions is past.

John.

My hope and trust is—that the next few days will see an end of the threatened catastrophe, it is inconceivable that this thing can go on, in this enlightened age.

Sandy.

It will go on.

John.

I was told this morning that the President had tendered his friendly offices to bring about peace.

Sandy.

He should instantly and resolutely place the moral force, and if need be the physical might of this country against Germany's onslaught on civilization.

John.

The policy of this country is *non*-interference in European politics—

Sandy.

This is not an European war, it is or will be a world war, you had better get your house in order this war may last ten years, it can easily run through twenty years, there may be a temporary or makeshift peace, that would be a calamity, for it would break anew, in the meantime the whole world would be an armed camp.

John.

Nonsense, man, nonsense.

Sandy.

Not at all, America has never been given to a study of world history and politics.

John.

We never had to, we've minded our own business.

Sandy.

We are provincial, the American people do not understand the forces at work and play.

John.

Maybe not, I guess you are right.

Sandy.

There are forces turned loose now, currents that have been chemicalizing for centuries, these forces and currents involve dynastic, racial, religious, social, political and economic issues.

John.

Possibly all that.

Sandy.

Life is a process, and the fermentation is the spawn and by-product of all the ages, Germany in her mad ambition for dominion and world domination, has forgotten the cross and calvary, the cross is not a medal to be worn for material victory, the cross is the crucifixion, it is the sublime and supreme sacrifice, that "the spirit liveth on forever." The world will not go back to Pagan, barbaric or primitive life. To avoid that consequence, the democracies of the world may have to battle for a century or more, but in the end, Prussianism and Germania will have to be destroyed.

John.

That would inevitably involve this country.

Sandy.

America will not move until it begins to understand, then its aroused conscience will be inflamed by the spirit of its departed dead whose quickened sepulchres were not made in vain for their sacred memory, and in that cause, America will fight the German idea forever.

John.

The world will be bankrupt.

Sandy.

Better that, than dishonor and slavery.

John.

But we don't want our children destroyed, I don't want to feed my children into the furnace of war.

Sandy.

Is your family any better than those of 1776 and 1861?

John.

Decidedly not if the test comes, no.

Sandy.

Then you had better get ready, for the test is coming—

John.

Some way must be found out of it all, the President is a great statesman and philosopher, diplomacy and conciliation must sheathe the sword, "the pen is mightier than the sword."

Sandy.

The pen cannot conciliate or chasten a mad beast, you can't make love to a leopard, you've got to cage a leopard, the world has got to break the Hun's sword, or christianity is a mockery.

John.

If it keeps going, we'll have a panic, my family and all of us will be ruined and broken.

Sandy.

What makes you jump to that conclusion?

John.

Because the business needs an amount of money beyond my power to raise.

Sandy.

Then you haven't given me your full confidence.

John.

Not exactly that, but things have grown and developed so rapidly that I myself have not grasped events and consequences.

(William and Tom enter from R., the inner office rather startled to find John & Sandy present.)

William.

A little early, aren't you?

Tom.

The demonstration is scheduled for eleven o'clock.

John.

What do you pay this fancy French demonstrator?

Tom.

He isn't French, he's Swiss.

William.

We pay him five dollars.

Sandy.

Per week?

Tom.

Per day, he isn't cheese, he's a chef, most expert.

John.

What are his hours?

William.

Two hours a day.

John.

Does your whole force work on that schedule?

William.

Well, not precisely, this man is a specialist.

Sandy.

How do you operate?

William.

The average hours in the plant are five and three-quarters.

Tom.

We have a minimum wage and a profit sharing schedule.

William.

A co-operative insurance scheme.

Tom.

And old age pensions.

William.

We have rest rooms and shower baths.

Tom.

And a bowling alley and reading rooms.

William.

No man can work in this plant who smokes, drinks, chews or gambles.

Tom.

We are going to take care of the men's morals.

William.

So that the men can save and become joint owners of the business.

Sandy.

Do you also furnish them with tops, marbles and candy?

John.

How do you expect to make anything?

Sandy.

When their expectations and limitations collide, there will be an explosion.

Tom.

This business is being planned on broad humanitarian principles, it can't lose, we'll make a billion—

Sandy.

Your broad humanitarian principles seem to make little provision for those who are supplying the capital to make your business possible

Tom.

Capital will get its return later on.

Sandy.

Later on—there may not be any later on, what then?

Tom.

You're a pessimist—what then—

William.

Our *idea* is by creating a partnership between capital and labor, we eliminate lost motion and waste, we propose to secure and hold the love and affection of our employees, that makes co-operative efficiency—this compelling force of co-related endeavor, produces the maximum of energy and result.

Tom.

Its the Henry Ford idea.

William.

The foundation unit of civilization is the family just as you, Dad, have builded for mother—for Emily and for me and included Aunt Polly, we plan for a widened group encompassing the whole human family, hasn't Henry Ford with honesty and rectitude made millions with his little tin toy following the same principle, we can make billions, the world doesn't have to ride, but it must eat, why not pork and beans, our pork and beans properly seasoned—its very simple.

Sandy.

Poetical, very poetical.

William.

One of the first things we plan to do in the spring is to lay out a park on Long Island and build ideal homes for our employees.

Tom.

I'll change my ring on my finger.

Sandy.

What's the idea?

Tom.

Its a reminder.

Sandy.

Of what?

Tom.

I've got to buy an encyclopedia.

Sandy.

What's an encyclopedia got to do with pork and beans?

Tom.

I want to find out how many billions of people in the world, and what they all eat.

Sandy.

What's the connection?

Tom.

We'll make them eat pork and beans.

Sandy.

All of them?

Tom.

Just think of our honest, legitimate profits, if a billion people eat only one can a year, think what that means.

Sandy.

It has considerable meaning.

Tom.

Suppose we educated them to eat one can a month, beans are healthy, and then *suppose, suppose—*

Sandy.

What's the last supposition?

Tom.

It makes my headache even to try to figure our profits, if we could get a billion people to eat a can a week.

Sandy.

When did you first begin to think in billions?

Tom.

I don't get you.

Sandy.

I can't think in billions.

Tom.

Why not?

Sandy.

My mind won't grasp it.

Tom.

Its very easy.

Sandy.

Not for me.

Tom.

I'll teach you, everything is mental and psychological, think it, think hard, think often, say it to yourself, say it out loud a million, a million, a million—a billion, a billion, a billion, a trillion, a trillion, a trillion.

Sandy.

What's a trillion, that's a new word.

Tom.

Its the new figure, a number, a trillion dollars is a thousand billion dollars.

Sandy.

Never heard of it, where did you get it, sounds like Aunt Polly and Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab, it must be occult.

Tom.

You might as well learn it we will soon be in the trillion dollar age.

John.

Sandy, for God's sake, come on let's look over the plant.

(Exit Sandy and John, back C.)

William.

Tom, how are we going to get the money to finance the western plant?

Tom.

From your father.

William.

What do you suppose my dad is, a government printing press?

Tom.

A very worthy and lovable father and I hope in law.

William.

There's a limit to dad's resources.

Tom.

Oh! of course.

William.

Money is earned, not manufactured, let's not overlook that we may not be as good business men as we think ourselves, I say as we think we are.

Tom.

See here Bill, are you losing confidence in yourself, are you getting cold feet this early in life.

William.

Not a darned bit of it, and what's more, you know it Tom Higgins, only who would have dreamed that this blamed war was coming off to muss things up.

Tom.

Why worry about the war, it isn't our scrap.

William.

Its mixing things up.

Tom.

It won't bother us, we're the richest nation on earth and we've got the punch.

William.

Why don't you help finance, your folks are rich?

Tom.

Didn't I give you the idea, didn't I?

William.

Yes, its your idea.

Tom.

How much do you want me to do, doesn't brain power count for anything, anyway Bill you know my gove'nor, now what chance would any guy have to get money out of my old man, gee he's as hard

as nails, he thinks not one man in a hundred has any right to live. He classifies people in two classes, fools and dam fools.

William.

I know—say Tom, what class does he put you in?

Tom.

He thinks you and I belong to the second class.

William.

One thing is sure and certain, any dam fool can have an *idea,* it takes a smart man to demonstrate the worth and value of it.

Tom.

Three talents are enough for any one man.

William.

If he has them, one talent is really enough if one really has *one.*

Tom.

I've got three.

William.

What do you call them?

Tom.

I have inspiration, ambition, enthusiasm.

William.

You hate yourself, you do, you belong to the ancient and dishonorable order of dreamers, you dream of royal robes and crowns and expect me to get them for you.

Tom.

You are losing your nerve.

William.

We are in trouble, and it may be very serious, I haven't said anything to Dad, I can't evidence lack of confidence or pep, but that western plant has got to be taken over next week, the first payment is fifty thousand, and then you know very well we have over three hundred thousand dollars' worth of Australian meats on order subject to draft in the next thirty days, foreign exchange is jumping, what are we to do, what can we do?

Tom.

Its easy—we ought to buy more meat, a great deal more, I believe in buying all the pork we can get, read the newspapers, they say Congress believes in pork, and some of these Congressmen are pretty wise guys.

William.

Easy Tom, its pretty soft for you, guys like you always have it soft and easy, live on your wits, never bother your head about anything.

Tom.

Does *worry* pay you any dividends, does losing sleep win you any yellow backs, calm yourself, take my advice and consult Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab, Aunt Polly's friend, she introduced me, fine investment, Micah has the right idea, *study the stars, they'll twinkle for you.*

William.

How in the deuce can I get any money out of the stars. The Trans-Continental Bank warned me this morning to go slow, there's a panic brewing —the war is raising merry hell, they are talking of closing the stock exchange, if it keeps going this way, we'll all go broke.

Tom.

Oh! cheer up, it will all come out alright. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Study your bible, its a good book, study Job, he was a patient guy.

William.

(The telephone rings, Wm. at the 'phone.)

Hello! Hello! yes, this is the office of Pork and Beans, Inc., William Smith—yes—no, not John Smith, this is William Smith, my father will be here shortly, you want him to ring you up, yes, yes, I understand, bill of lading, draft attached *twenty thousand three seventy-six* not that much in our account, we'll make it good right away.

Tom.

Banks are a nuisance, why don't they pay the draft, what are banks for anyway if they can't pay one's checks and drafts?

William.

How does that bean shipment come to be so big? I certainly thought I had that taken care of.

Tom.

Whose draft is it?

William.

Michigan beans, seems to me its three times as much as we agreed to order, I'll look it up.

Tom.

Oh! I guess its all right, who has the draft?

William.

The Stuvesant National, where are we going to get the money?

Tom.

You will just have to get it, we have to have those beans, it wouldn't be pork and without the beans.

William.

Dam you Tom Higgins, I must get it, you are the greatest little—"Let George do it" I ever saw. What do you think I am, and my poor old Dad trusting me, and believing in me, backing me down to the bone.

Tom.

You are a wonder, your father's a wonder, your mother is a wonderful mother, your sister is the most wonderful girl I ever met, I'm crazy about her, she makes me delirious every time I think of her, I wish to God I was a member of your family.

William.

Well, I am going to vote against your admission.

Tom.

Now come, old pal, you wouldn't, would you really do that Bill—to me—

William.

Exactly that.

(Enter Emily and Tony.)

Emily.

Hello! Will you leave home so early now-a-days, I never see you in the morning.

William.

Early, well, I get up now at five-thirty. I have to work, I get here at seven o'clock, you folks are in the way—you are to confounded prompt.

Tony.

Miss Emily was afraid ze was to late to see your father.

Emily.

Has father gone, where is father?

Tony.

Where ees father?

William.

Did you come—

Tom.

What did you come for?

William.

We invited you to a pork and bean exhibition.

Tom.

Observation—I mean demonstration.

Emily.

Halucination, Tony wants to see father, and I want to see father.

William.

You better not worry him to-day, what's the trouble?

Emily.

The Bridge of Tolls.

William.

I thought so, I guess Dad is still paying tolls.

Tom.

Bill, won't you please take Mr. Martinelli back to see father, back in the plant, way back, Miss Emily, please don't go, just this minute.

Emily.

I must explain to father.

Tom.

I must explain to you.

William.

Of all the nerve, you take the shine, come on Tony.

(They exit arguing, Tony remonstrating.)

Emily.

I can't give you more than a minute, please be brief.

Tom.

How can you?

Emily.

Can what?

Tom.

Why don't you?

Emily.

Do what?

Tom.

Can the spaghetti.

Emily.

Do you count that a highly cultivated thought?

Tom.

Er-er-er-er, it was unworthy and ungentlemanly.

Emily.

I'll forgive you, don't do it again, I want to be your friend.

Tom.

I don't want to be rude, I don't mean to presume, but Miss Emily, as sure as you live, that guy is after your money.

Emily.

What are you after, money is your God.

Tom.

You are my God, I pray to you every hour of every day.

Emily.

Let it remain silent devotion.

Tom.

I've got to tell you that I love you.

Emily.

But I don't love you.

Tom.

The moment I first set eyes on you, I knew you had a halter around my neck.

Emily.

You have a pretty neck.

Tom.

For you to choke, oh! please don't.

Emily.

Forget me.

Tom.

How can I, when I'm out of your sight I'm miserable.

Emily.

Oh! fudge, all boys say that.

Tom.

I don't like fudge, really I don't.

Emily.

You have pretty eyes, YET I would never marry a man with brown eyes.

Tom.

Don't kid me, you are cruel, I worship you and I want you to be my wife.

Emily.

Mrs. Thomas Higgins.

Tom.

Won't you say yes?

Emily.

That is some advance over Smith, nevertheless, I like *Smith,* its democratic, and such a good old American name, for the present, I think I'll keep it.

Tom.

What's in a name, if you like Smith, we'll keep Smith—I'd just as soon be Smith as Higgins, I want you.

Emily.

You can't have me.

Tom.

I'm going to marry you, you've got to marry me, no other man can have you, I'll make you love me.

Emily.

What is there about you, that you think I really ought to love?

Tom.

Young woman, you need discipline, if you think you can ridicule me and get away with it, you are mistaken in the man, this fool stage idea has turned your little blonde head, there's nothing to it, don't ruin your life, write yes, but don't act—

Emily.

Tom, may I call you Tom?

TOM.

You may call me any old thing.

Emily.

Well, then, if you are serious—

Tom.

How could you doubt my intense love for you?

Emily.

If we must be serious, let me say earnestly but kindly it can never be, we are not fitted for each other, we would never be happy.

Tom.

Foolish child, we'll be happier than heaven, we'll be rich and famous.

Emily.

What are riches good for?

Tom.

Don't you know what you can buy for money?

Emily.

Not happiness, don't you see the breakers ahead?

Tom.

Not with you, I could sail any sea.

Emily.

Think of the storms that sweep the sea.

Tom.

The sunshine of your smile will break any cloud.

Emily.

Marriage is a wide ocean and has many moods.

Tom.

My great love for you would lull the angry ones.

Emily.

Tempests break unawares.

Tom.

That wouldn't hurt us if we have a good ship.

Emily.

Many have to leave the good ship and row in small boats.

Tom.

I've a good strong arm.

Emily.

Physical strength you have its a good asset, mental and moral stamina is as essential, have you that?

Tom.

For a girl, you ask a boy the funniest questions.

Emily.

When one marries, boyhood and girlhood ends.

Tom.

Why should it, mine won't.

Emily.

That's the very point Tom, frankly I have grave doubts if you have strong moral stamina and character, that is what makes the real man, you see when I say yes to a man, I want to be very sure of that yes, its only one wee bit of a word, but it means everything.

Tom.

Everything.

Emily.

Everything in the world to a woman.

Tom.

Just as much to a man.

Emily.

No, you don't understand the fundamental things of life, if you think so, *a woman has nothing in the world but her youth, a man has everything even old age.*

Tom.

You're a many sided girl, I've always known how wonderful you are, if you will be my wife, no matter how old you may grow, no matter how wrinkled or how grey, to me you will always be just as you are to-day, youth—

Emily.

That is the true test of a happy marriage all men promise, few perform.

Tom.

I swear by all the saints in heaven to keep my word.

Emily.

I'm not interested in marrying at this time.

Tom.

You should be, you are old enough to marry.

Emily.

How do you know how old I am?

Tom.

Aren't you Bill's twin sister?

Emily.

Oh!

Tom.

I'm some older and you should listen to your elders.

Emily.

Why do you want to marry, and why me?

Tom.

Because I love you.

Emily.

You think you do, I am not so sure you know what real true love is.

Tom.

Do you, and if you do, how do you come to be so wise?

Emily.

Haven't you said a thousand times I was wonderful—*I'm not*, there's nothing wonderful about me, I know myself, I'm a plain American girl, women are growing faster than you men think, I want to marry some day, it's my dream as much as that of every girl that has gone before, but I am not going to marry foolishly, just to be married. I want to know the temper of the steel of the man who gives me his pledge.

Tom.

You are right—God you are wonderful, you make me tingle, I'm going to fight for you, give me a chance.

Emily.

Chances are made, not given (laughing, she runs, exit, back C.).

Tom.

She's dead right, a man should prove the metal in him, I wonder if I am any good.
(Enter John, William and Tony.) Excuse me
(Tom exits back C.).

William.

Dad, don't do this.

John.

Why not, it's for your sister.

William.

Because, Dad, it's all wrong, all wrong.
(Enter Emily.)

Emily.

What's all wrong?

William.

This foolishness between you and Tony, honest *sis,* you don't know the difference between sugar and salt.

Tony.

Meester Willie, your sister is incomparable, you will be proud.

John.

Martinelli, how much more money do you think this production will really need?

Tony.

Three thousand, four thousand, five thousand maybe six.

John.

You've had five thousand already, you told me when you started out, Emily, that you had it all figured out, eight thousand dollars were the total estimates, if I remember correctly.

Emily.

Yes, father, that's so.

Tony.

Things always cost, *more,* much *more* zen ze *figure.*

William.

The Bridge of Tolls, Dad, Tony will have the bridge, you'll pay the tolls.

Emily.

I could say ugly things if I wanted to, there are many things in this family that need seasoning besides *William's* pork and beans.

John.

Well, Martinelli, try and keep your expenses down, I'll give you a thousand to-morrow, anyway.

(Exit back C.—Emily and Tony.)

William.

You know, Dad, we've a draft at the Stuyvesant National, bean draft—Michigan beans, twenty thousand—three seventy six—that's just got to be paid to-day.

John.

I've sent Andrew downtown with some prime securities, it's a package my boy—I had put away

for your mother's old age, I never thought I would *ever* touch that package, Andrew ought to be here any minute.

William.

Dad, you don't mean that you are so extended that you are doing that?

John.

Yes—my boy—precisely that.

William.

We have got to raise a lot of money yet—I thought you had succeeded in selling a good bunch of treasury stock.

John.

Your books ought to show the exact amount you have sold.

William.

I know what the stock book shows, but I thought you said you had some one in tow for big sales, who have you invited over to-day—any good prospect for a substantial deal, we need an awful lot of money.

John.

Robert and Edward Gilles, Mrs. Thornton, you know she is very rich, old Howard Johnstone thinks well of it, Peter Smelzer the brewer.

William.

I hope the affair is a success, if it goes well, we ought to sell, how much do you think we might sell them?

John.

I don't know, figuring is just figuring, it doesn't always produce results, you and Tom figured me into this thing, but then I'm only your father.

William.

You've been a mighty fine Dad to me.

John.

If things only come out one one-hundredth of your expectations, I'll be a very happy man, you see, my boy, you and Emily are everything in the world to me, I do so want to see you succeed.

William.

I've found out more about life in the last two months in business than during all my years in college, it takes a whopping lot of money to get an organization of this kind going. Isn't money a funny kind of a thing?

John.

As you grow older, you'll find something funnier than money.

William.

What can it be?

John.

A woman's smile.

William.

I don't understand.

John.

The dimple in a woman's cheek.

William.

I don't think I understand you.

John.

The wave in a woman's hair.

William.

Just what do you mean?

John.

A woman's hand, the turn of her ankle.

William.

What are you driving at?

John.

Her gloves, the perfume on her handkerchief.

William.

Dad, what's the game?

John.

The funniest game in the world, money and woman.

William.

You think I've misplayed the first and may the second.

John.

I've been trying to figure you out, I don't think I understand you, I'm wondering if there's a woman in your life.

William.

Isn't it strange, you're my father and I'm your son and we've been pals in a way, and we don't know each other, I've never thought about girls, only I want to succeed.

John.

I suppose we never see each other or anything from the same angle, young folks never understand like old folks, and old folks always believe in the possibilities of youth, nevertheless, it's true success is a thing you can't wish on anybody.

William.

If one's principles are correct, and one works hard, things are bound to come out.

John.

If one makes a true reckoning of *all* the elements that enter into the situation, and one's luck is running fifty per cent. with him.

(Enter Tom R.)

Tom.

Governor, The Stuvesant Natl. 'phoned a few minutes ago, they want you to come down, the President wants to talk to you.

John.

Yes! Yes! I'll go down.

Tom.

Banks are a blamed nuisance, aren't they?

(Enter Sandy, Emily and Tony, Back C.)

Emily.

Uncle Mc thinks The Bridge of Tolls is a classic, I've given him the big climax.

Tony.

Et ees a work of art.

John.

Sandy, do you think this play is really a play, has it a chance?

Sandy.

It sounds pretty good to me.

Emily.

Didn't you tell me you thought it was a classic, honest, now, didn't you?

Sandy.

Honey, I was only teasing you, I really know nothing of the stage, I have been told that playwriting is like the seven years' itch, you itch and you scratch and the thing never leaves you.

William.

Oh! Dad forget it—it's Emily's folly, poor kid, she'll learn, it must be terribly difficult for a woman to get an idea of the world.

Emily.

Please, Mr. William the Conqueror, when you make your billions of money, won't you, among your multitudinous philanthropies, at least build your little sister a toy playhouse.

William.

I suppose you want to be a Marie Antoinette —no, siree, no royal family for me, we are democrats, this is a bad century for Kings, the Kings and Queens have got to go.

(Enter Robinson highly elated.)

Robinson.

It's all right, Mr. Smith.

John.

How much did you raise?

Robinson.

Seventy-five thousand dollars.

John.

Bully, what did it cost, what was the toll?

Robinson.

I had to pay four bonuses, twenty per cent. in all.

John.

Good God, the usurers.

Sandy.

What do you mean twenty per cent. in all?

Robinson.

Just what I say, it's like this, I couldn't see the President of the bank, you seldom can see the President, I saw the third Vice-President, he said times were too precarious to be loaning money, but he recommended me to Graham and Company the brokers, you see their advertisements in all the papers.

Sandy.

Those fellows have a shady reputation.

Robinson.

They said they thought they could get the money if I would pay them five per cent. brokerage, they would work it through a friend who had influence with his bank, this friend would want five per cent. for his work, now this friend had a friend in the bank who pulled the strings in the bank and he had to have five per cent., then the President of the bank had to have five per cent., when I got through the barbed wire financial entanglements, the total brokerage was twenty per cent., but I got the money, Mr. Smith, you told me you had to have it no matter what it cost, and I always obey orders, literally, sir!

John.

What bank made the loan?

Robinson.

The bank that sent me to Graham and Co., The Homestead Trust Co.

Sandy.

Didn't I hear you say some time ago, William, that you wanted money, heaps of money, mountains of money, millions of money, billions of money, and what was that word that Tom coined, trillion—I think maybe you boys will become trillionaires, paying twenty per cent. usury is a good start towards your goal.

John.

This is what goes on among business men, in this the greatest city of the world.

Robinson.

Many of the biggest banks and trust companies do it, Mr. Smith; always have done it, ever since I've been a *secretary.*

John.

The law is pretty bad, sometimes I'm terribly disheartened, but the law is petty larceny compared to the banking business.

Sandy.

It's all in the game, part of Emily's tolls that we pay to cross the bridge.

William.

But the bridge ought to be free, it's infamous, and we ought not pay it.

John.

But we have to have the money, what's a man to do, deep down in my heart I've been sick and sore for years, that's why I listened to William's pork and bean proposition, I'm always saying to myself, maybe it will prove a gold mine.

William.

Dad, we are going to succeed, it's a great idea, a thoroughly seasoned idea, if we make good, we can remedy a lot of wrongs in the world.

Sandy.

When is this darned demonstration coming off?

John.

Tom, get the Stuyvesant on the 'phone for me, please.

Tom.

All right governor (takes 'phone), Rector, 9100, please—Hello, Rector, 9100, this the Stuyvesant Natl. just a minute—all right, governor.

John.

(Takes 'phone) Stuvesant Natl. Bk.—I want to speak to President Dinsmore, please, yes, yes, John Smith, Pork & Beans, Inc. Hello! Mr. President, this is John Smith, you want to have a confidential talk with me about the business, yes, what do I think of it—well, I'm backing it to the limit, it ought to be a winner, it looks as if it might be a mint, you ought to get some of the stock, our account, oh! that's all right, we're depositing seventy-five thousand dollars to-day, I'll see you tomorrow (rings off). Have you made your deposit, Robinson?

Robinson.

An hour ago, sir (exits R.).

John.

If this thing goes, I'm going to pension Robinson. (Enter Robert and Edward Gilles—Mrs. Thornton.) Oh! how do you do, Mrs. Thornton, I'll declare you are getting younger and more beautiful

every day, do you know Mr. Robert Gillis, Mr. Edward Gilles, may I introduce you, Mrs. Thornton, Mess. Gilles.

The Gilles.

Mrs. Thornton.

Mrs. Thornton.

I am sure it is a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Gilles, John Smith, you are such a flatterer, don't I realize that Richard Thornton has been dead ten years, how I have missed the dear soul, he was a model husband, I think good husbands always die young, isn't that so, Mr. Gilles?

Robert Gilles.

I've always had an idea that the best ones never marry.

Mrs. Thornton.

Do you mean to say you do not believe in marriage.

Edward Gilles.

Oh! my—you mustn't take Bobby seriously, Bobby is a widower, without chick or child, he's very lonesome and really has a beautiful disposition.

Robert Gilles.

Mrs. Thornton, have you any children?

Mrs. Thornton.

No incumbrances, why do you ask?

Edward Gilles.

Bobby loves children.

John.

Now, I will wager that Mrs. Thornton's twenty-eighth birthday will not come this year.

Mrs. Thornton.

I did marry very young.

John.

Nevertheless, your wisdom was demonstrated in youth for Thornton left you a beautiful estate.

Mrs. Thornton.

See how your wisdom has added to it, do you know my secretary was figuring with me last night, since you probated poor Richard's will, you've made a clean quarter of million for me.

Robert Gilles.

I say, Edward, she is young and pretty.

Edward Gilles.

Bobby, I wonder what she had to start with—this John Smith is a deuced clever lawyer.

(Enter Howard Johnstone and Peter Smelzer.)

John.

So glad to see you Johnstone, how are you, Peter?

Peter.

Ach! got un himmel, John, pork mit beans—I not like im, ober for you John, meine guten freundt, I puy twenty tousand stock, you say so—yes, I puy, ober it vehr nicht besser, sauer kraut und wiener wurst. Ach! got un himmel, das is essen, fine, smecks gut, ober pork and beans, nicht, das is nicht essen.

Howard Johnstone.

Every nation has its favorite food or dish, it's characteristic and typical, now Peter, you Germans like sauer kraut and wiener wurst, your kraut of course is sliced into strings and pickled, your wurst, sausages, ground meat, it's all typical, your nation is a pickled nation, your people are ground into pieces like sausage meat, and you're packed into a skin and your rulers string you together like a bunch of wiener wurst.

Robert Gilles.

Very good! upon my word, who ever heard of an Englishman liking sausage, you can't grind an Englishman.

John Smith.

"Seasoned Pork and Beans, Inc.," is a good investment. I believe in it. I wasn't content to accept my own judgment, you see I might have been swayed by self-interest, before inviting the public or permitting my friends to partake of the flavored product, I submitted the idea to experts, both technical and financial, the opinions I received bulwarked me, the stock in the course of time should rival Standard Oil.

Mrs. Thornton.

I'll take fifty thousand dollars' worth, John, however, I can't pay for it entirely until January, my interest and dividend quarter, you know.

Robert Gilles.

Upon my soul.

Edward Gilles.

Quarter income permits fifty, annual must exceed two hundred.

(Enter Mary, Aunt Polly.)

Mary.

We've had a terrible morning, two tires blew out.

John.

Unbelievable.

Sandy.

Everything in the world blows out when tired.

Emily.

You wicked punster.

Sandy.

The greatest surprise to me is that we, myself, at any rate, haven't blown out long ago.

John.

The pun is not relevant, the car is a brand new car, and the tires haven't worked long enough to be tired.

Sandy.

But they may be like the average men and women of the day, tired before they started.

Robert Gilles.

But most folks are not tied when they start.

Edward Gilles.

Bobby, you are thinking of strings.

Sandy.

I said tired not tied.

Mrs. Thornton.

I do love you Englishmen, you are so witty.

Mary.

The car must be to heavy, there's something wrong with it.

Polly.

I'm afraid of my life in these fast machines. there are so many things to run into.

William.

Poor Aunt Polly.

Polly.

Don't you poor Aunt Polly me.

William.

Forgive me, I love you.

Polly.

I'm happy, even if I am lonesome, besides I am not an idler, and I have no vagaries, no foibles and no frailities, neither fads or idiosyncracies, no fancies and no follies.

William.

Have you see Micah Hab Dab Hab Dab lately.

Polly.

I saw Micah this morning.

William.

Oh! you did.

Polly.

Micah says the war is on for years, maybe five, maybe ten, maybe fifty.

John.

You are sure he said maybe.

Polly.

He certainly did, and I've started knitting, knitting for the soldiers, Micah says we'll soon be in it, that we can't keep out of it, Micah says the stars tell him ten million men will die, millions of women and little children will die, a hundred million will be in want and distress, crippled, diseased, famished, the world will be staggered by the horror of it all, just because a tainted, cruel, loathsome crew of Prussian curs want to force the world to eat sauerkraut and wiener wurst and goose-step the world into a Prussian helmet to the tune of "deutschland uber alles"—

Robert Gilles.

I say who is Micah, Hab Dab, Hab Dab?

John.

Only Aunt Polly's astrologist.

Tom.

A most wonderful man, I've met him, the stars indicate famine and he told me to invest in food-stuffs, I have in pork and beans.

Polly.

If you men and women have any understanding of what this war involves, you'll learn to knit, for knitting will win the war, before very long every man, woman and child in the world will have to fight, knit or pay (she distributes yarn and needles).

Peter.

Nicht, I nicht, knit, you nicht like sauerkraut und wiener wurst, I nicht like pork mit beans, und I nicht knit, I go.

John.

Oh! don't go Peter, Aunt Polly did not mean to offend you.

Peter.

Icht besser I go.

John.

I'd like to have you test the pork and beans, you know they are seasoned.

Peter.

Neine, I go.

John.

Shall I send your stock to the brewery, you'd better take fifty thousand Peter, it's a great investment.

William.

The stock ought to be worth two hundred a share in six months.

Peter.

You nicht goose step, I nicht goose step, Ich nicht buy your stock, guten tag (exits).

Tom.

You shouldn't have offended him Aunt Polly, it isn't a good thing to speak your mind too freely, twenty thousand was a good subscription, he might have taken more, besides we need the money.

Edward Gilles.

You need the money.

William.

You see we are buying and starting a western plant, this is developing into a tremendous, monumental business, a regular steel corporation, a billion-dollar proposition.

Robert Gilles.

Did you say steal?

William.

U. S. Steel.

Robert Gilles.

Oh!

Polly.

Don't you understand how to knit?

Robert Gilles.

I say, isn't that a woman's task, isn't it?

Polly.

Some men have feminine inclinations.

Robert Gilles.

Oh!

Polly.

We can't have slackers, men and women, young and old will have to knit, Micah says, and astrology never fails, its a science, the whole world is doomed, the truth is being crucified.

Robert Gilles.

I say my word.

Edward Gilles.

This Micah, is he a phonograph, you say he gets a wireless from the stars.

Sandy.

Yes! Yes! Mars has the line.

Edward Gilles.

I wonder if one had better not be careful with one's money.

Robert Gilles.

I hadn't thought of that, we might need it.

Sandy.

I can't learn to knit, Aunt Polly, I'm to old, can't we have the pork and beans. I like 'em.

Tom.

Ha! Ha! you want to incorporate them.

(Enter Jacques and assistant bringing a very ingenuous automatic extension table, it has a heavy base and center, on which Jacques and assistant proceed to lay a large round table, cover it with fine white linen, while it is being prepared, conversation continues.)

Emily.

I don't like the color of these knitting needles, Aunt Polly.

Polly.

Aren't they red, white and blue, I meant to give you my favorite ones.

Emily.

Would you believe me, I had not noticed that, its a pretty idea.

Tom.

What's your idea in giving me yellow ones, if you have a color scheme.

Polly.

No offense meant, young man.

Mary.

Mine bend to much, I never could knit.

Mrs. Thornton.

This yarn is really to thin to do anything with it.

William.

If you pursue this Aunt Polly, we'll have to build more yarn mills.

Polly.

With all this money you are going to make out of pork and beans, you can start a good many yarn mills.

Sandy.

Good, don't let them tease you, Aunt Polly.

William.

We all love you dearest Aunt Polly.

Tom.

I love you, as if you were my very own, Aunt Polly.

Sandy.

I'm frightfully hungry (Jacques and assistant enter moving steaming perambulator, assistant with big silver tray, plates, cups and saucers).

William.

Did you ever smell anything quite so fragrant?

Sandy.

You have a good imagination, I'm hungry but can't smell anything.

Tom.

Food for the Gods and a hungry world.

John.

I haven't had any breakfast.

Howard Johnstone.

I must have my coffee before I get out of bed, else I headache all day.

Robert Gilles.

A cup of hot milk is much better, coffee is poison.

Howard Johnstone.

I couldn't do without my coffee.

Aunt Polly.

One man's meat is another man's poison, pork and beans never did exactly agree with me.

William.

Ours are different.

Tom.

They are highly seasoned.

Mary.

Its a very wholesome food.

Tom.

We'll have so much money Bill, we'll make Henry Ford pale with envy.

Tony.

I lika spaghetti better, in sunny It—the fine spaghet—

Mrs. Thornton.

Whose recipe is this?

Tom.

It isn't a recipe, its an inspiration, one of three great talents.

William.

One of three.

Tom.

There isn't any reason in the world why everybody in the world shouldn't eat pork and beans.

Edward Gilles.

I say everybody doesn't like pork and beans.

Tom.

Like 'em, you've got to like 'em, they're seasoned.

Robert Gilles.

Upon my word everybody doesn't like seasoned food.

Polly.

Seasoned food causes dyspepsia.

(Jacques and assistant draw coffee.)

Sandy.

There's too much pepper in this dish for me (he begins to cough).

John.

You mean its to highly seasoned (he coughs).

Mrs. Thornton.

To much pepper—

Polly.

There must be tomatoe in this combination, I got awfully sick once eating tomatoes, do you like tomatoe, Mr. McPherson?

Sandy.

I do—many do not.

Tony.

Tomat—fine, help the spaghet—

Tom.

You can't season it too highly for me, pep is my middle name.

Tony.

To much pep spoil the spaghet.

EMILY.

Men and women differ in their taste in respect to seasoning their food as widely as in their clothes and their loves.

Polly.

I could have told you that, nobody knits alike.

Mary.

John, you have such a logical analytical mind, how did you miss the point?

Sandy.

What's the good of marrying, if your women folks let you make this sort of a blunder, why have a family, hire cooks, they can't do worse.

Robert Gilles.

I say.

Edward Gilles.

My word.

Mrs. Thornton.

Horrors.

Polly.

What did you say that brewer's name was, Peter Smells-her.

Howard Johnstone.

I'm sorry John, I really don't think it desirable stock, I had a notion I'd take a hundred thousand dollars, but I must decline.

Robert Gilles.

Yes! Yes! we thought we'd take fifty thousand dollars' worth for sister's estate, but it wouldn't do, would it to put orphan's money in "Seasoned Pork and Beans, Inc.," in the circumstances.

Edward Gilles.

My word no, Bobby—no, indeed.

Mrs. Thornton.

My dear John, what shall I do, I'll be guided by your judgment altogether.

John.

You must not buy to-day, Aunt Polly, the stars are not twinkling for us to-day.

Tom.

I think its wonderful stuff, Jacques, give me another plate full.

William.

Yes, Jacques, give it to him.

Tom.

Couldn't we manufacture different grades of seasoning?

William.

It isn't feasable, the idea that appealed to me was bottomed on unity, concentration, quality, quantity, the whole scheme falls apart.

Tom.

I don't see, exactly, that, "seasoned to suit you" would be a good selling slogan, this thing must not, cannot fail, my whole life is at stake, the fundamental idea, of seasoned food must be utilized, everybody likes things that taste good, now, we mustn't lose that *idea,* its a golden *idea,* and I don't propose to lose it, for goodness sake, don't give up so quick.

Sandy.

The world is full of ideas.

Robert Gilles.

I say it isn't easy to cash them, is it?

William.

It won't do, Tom, old pal, it won't work, I see it now, strange I didn't see it before, you don't understand the psychology of mass salesmanship, I've studied it, salesmanship is the greatest art in the world, every sale involves art, and all art is for sale, the art started in the garden of Eden, when the devil originated the sale of clothes, Adam and Eve were the first purchasers, they bought fig leaves, they thought they bought knowledge, but the thing was camouflaged then just as it is now, all dressed up and no place to go, this thing called knowledge that all the world is bidding for, what is it, posterity would have been better off undressed, I'm not sure we would have needed money, nothing to hide, nothing to buy, Adam and Eve put a terrible mortgage on mankind when they surrendered the naked truth—can't you see—don't you understand?

Tom.

Maybe it would be better if we didn't know anything, but I still think, seasoned pork and beans can be sold in quantities for lots of money.

WILLIAM.

You're wrong, a lady calls on her grocer, a worse pest and fiend than the tax collector, for while taxes have to be paid once a year, your grocer is in your kitchen in some form or other every day, now the lady says to the grocer, I'll have some pork and beans, the grocer says, how will you have them seasoned, light, medium or heavy, the lady meditates a moment, my youngest likes them light, my oldest likes them heavy, my hubby likes them

medium, do you get me, how can you mix them to tickle the palate of the world's family, it can't be done.

Tom.

I've got to think this thing over, I don't believe in giving up.

William.

What is there to think over, we've miscalculated the whole thing, it was too simple, the thing wont work, its a fizzle, a failure, its terrible, Tom, your rotten *idea,* child of your three talents has played hell.

John.

We are ruined, bankrupt, great God, this is awful.

Tony.

You mean no money left for the play?

John.

None, absolutely none.

Tony.

No money, no play, no Tony, good night nurse (exit).

Emily.

The vagabond, he has my manuscript.

Sandy.

I want money, a lot of money, heaps of money, mountains of money, millions of money, billions of money.

(Slow curtain.)

Act III.

The setting—same as Act I.

Discovered:

William and Emily, the latter knitting, the former pacing the floor nervously.

William.

This suspense is killing me, I must be losing my mind.

Emily.

Don't be foolish.

William.

How long is it going to last, no cable from London, none from Paris, not a line from Washington.

Emily.

To-day is three weeks since father did that silly trick.

William.

I shouldn't call it silly.

Emily.

What would you call it?

William.

Wisdom, with sublime courage.

Emily.

To me it is craven cowardice.

William.

What do you women know about life anyway?

Emily.

Something, a little.

William.

Nothing, if anything, very little.

Emily.

Oh! a great deal more than men, we create life.

William.

In a way, yes.

Emily.

Men are born of, and nurtured by women.

William.

It would be better if we were never born.

Emily.

Idiotic.

William.

If we were never born, we wouldn't have to try to learn how to live, and we wouldn't have to die.

Emily.

Neurotic, misanthrope.

William.

What's the good of it all, life's a joke.

Emily.

Life is beautiful.

William.

Its a wicked, cruel joke, its a jolly hoax, every one that has lived it knows it, they might not admit it.

Emily.

You are sinful, to say that.

William.

We come into the world without being consulted, given a sex, I guess that's an accident, however, I'm lucky in that respect, I shouldn't have enjoyed being a woman, we are blonde or brunette, white or black or yellow, have you ever stopped to think what a grouch the yellows are entitled too the ones that aren't even regular, what do the irregulars have to do with their birth certificate, not that it really makes an awful lot of difference, but society says it does, we are given certain attributes and characteristics, most of them perfectly damnable, we'd never pick them if we had any choice, we are given a horrible assortment of anatomical machinery, think of the alibi one's forebears, create when one is endowed with a torpid liver, now what I would like to know, was it really necessary for a man to have a liver, do you think so, think of the crimes that are committed on account of bad livers, most men's families have bad livers, and very few of them have good hearts.

Emily.

Yours has lost its rythm.

William.

There's nothing in the world that's right, its a drunken orgy this thing you call life—father was right to try and end his—his mistake was in not succeeding—there's nothing to it—what's the use of all this never-ending struggle—this whirlpool of baffling conflicting currents—this miasma of deferred and defeated hopes—this uncanny thing that

always lures you on and on, along a dangerous precipice, and finally, willy nilly dumps you into the fathomless abyss of eternity.

Emily.

Its cowardly not to face the issue—four square to every wind that blows—come what may.

William.

Why should it be, it takes a brave man to blow the light out—rather than let it burn out—take father's case as a fair example—of the average man—take his life, turn it over, think it over—

Emily.

What of it—he has a lot to be thankful for.

William.

Not very much—a life of grinding hard work and sacrifice mostly spent in slaving for his family—father's been a straight decent man—lived for his family—planning their comfort and happiness—dreaming of a companionable old age—children to halo its vesper hours—you and me—what do we do, just exactly what the average child does, raise hell.

Emily.

Not at all, father was an adult when he married and established a family, he understood the responsibilities or should have.

William.

How could he know that one of his children would want to be a playwright?

Emily.

Didn't he run away from home?

William.

What of it?

Emily.

Its the spirit of the family not to be shackled.

William.

Yes, but he made his own way, whereas you and I are only parasites.

Emily.

Father is to blame for that.

William.

To blame for being too good to us.

Emily.

Certainly—if he used bad judgment and pampered us—spared the rod and spoiled the child—he didn't have to listen to our whims—its a wise parent that knows how to say *no.*

William.

Well, how in the hell can a parent tell what to do with his children?

Emily.

The problem is about the same as every other human equation, if one makes a mistake, one need not surrender.

William.

Oh! what's the good of it all, what does it get you?

Emily.

Everything that's worth anything.

William.

There isn't anything that's worth anything, what's it all about, tell me that.

EMILY.

The great big thing in the world is love—

William.

There isn't any love in the world.

Emily.

Its everywhere, you can see it—in the infinite ever recreating spark that fires the soul of man—in the electric current that flashes its inspiration from generation to generation, you can see it in the stupendous plan of the universe—isn't it a wonderful thing just to live—to bathe in the flood of sunshine to inhale, the incense of the flowers, *to enjoy* the intoxication of nature itself.

William.

Sis, its a dream, love and sunshine and flowers may be all right, as long as your credit is good at the Ritz Carleton, but even there they have dirty dishes and dirty linen that has to be washed.

Emily.

If everything was perfection, there would be no problem to work out, that would be paradise, you ask to much.

William.

I am not asking for paradise I grant you, that nature is fairly well ordered, although *we do* have earthquakes, cyclones and tidal waves, but waiving all that, how is an ordinary, every day, working human being to find his place in this monstrous machine?

Emily.

Everything and everyone has a place and there is a place for everything and every one.

William.

One might as well try to find the proverbial needle in the haystack.

Emily.

You surprise me.

William.

Doubtless.

Emily.

A few months ago you graduated with high honors, a bright perhaps a great career opened to you, in an honorable profession for which you were at least, reasonably well qualified, father handed you upon a silver platter, an inheritance, his practice, his life work, you spurned it—

William.

You had the same great gift offered you and you spurned it.

Emily.

Only because I reached the conclusion that the practice of the law was not a woman's proper sphere, my legal education will serve me a useful purpose.

William.

One alibi is as good as another.

Emily.

You ran into a side-track because you thought it would lead you easily and quickly into a mine of wealth, you should have stayed on the main line, now because you made a wretched failure, have wrecked and ruined father and the family, you become a pessimist, a cynic and an iconoclast, facing a hopeless chasm of doubt and defeat, buckle

up and be a man, *life is wonderful,* it is the supreme magnet that draws the fire of great men's souls.

William.

You women are getting a hold of life in a man's world and you think you'll solve it in a hurry, you'll get slashed all right, the world is a jig-saw that cuts your heart out, its an elusive will-o'-the-wisp, I've known it ever since I've worn knee pants, that's the reason I wanted a lot of money, money is some friend.

Emily.

Don't be an erratic anarchist—

William.

Who ever heard of an anarchist that wanted money?

Emily.

I think they do.

William.

No, you're wrong, all they want is an explosion.

Emily.

Isn't that your temper, now, aren't you in rebellion against everything that's regular and orderly.

William.

I want power to control the machinery that grinds men.

Emily.

You have the foolish ambition of youth—every Harvard graduate wants to regulate the world.

William.

Life is very unjust and very unfair.

Emily.

Its part of a perfect and sublime plan.

William.

Its a wretched plan, every life, every home, every family—is just like the Smith family—nothing but broken china every way you turn is confusion—blasted hopes—every road in the universe leads to defeat, and disappointment—not one to happiness —no man dies satisfied.

Emily.

You are crabbed and sour, because your first effort failed, you struck out, you thought you had an Aladdin's lamp, that fairy-like would bring you a fountain of wealth, you should have known that the million a minute game has been played in some form or other ever since the world began, you can't get to heaven or create a paradise here in that way.

William.

Heaven and hell is a myth, you're in heaven when you've had a good feed, and you're in hell when you're hungry and haven't the price.

Emily.

A little learning is a dangerous thing, your education has given you some knowledge, but little understanding.

William.

Oh! fudge, I have understanding enough, its the same old story, thread it out, you meet Mrs. Robert Livingstone Pembroke, the grand dame, you know

the fluff with the lorgnette or you meet Maggie of Avenue A, they are all members of the Smith family, of course every Smith family has its poor relations and its Aunt Polly's, what are you going to do with them, you can't poison them, you have to mark them and tag them, card index them, but they are all alike, just a bone and a hank of hair, every one of them will tell you the story of their life in thirty minutes by the watch, show you every skeleton in their closet and if you press the button, every skeleton will begin to talk, you'll soon find that all the skeletons are related and they know each other's history and everyone of them, I say every dad blasted one of them belong to the bone family, which is only another name for the Smith family.

Emily.

Well, what of it?

William.

The hell of it,—the torment and distress, the realization that comes to us all, some in youth, others in decay, the problems that Adam and Eve struggled with—are the Smith family's problems of to-day, thousands of years come and go, the same kind of water flows into the sea, nothing changes, there is no betterment, you have new religions, new theories, so-called new philosophies, cults, cultures, its the same old story, nothing but *bones*—

Emily.

You arrogate to yourself to much importance.

William.

Oh! do I, well, maybe I do.

Emily.

That's human frailty, life is a simple evolution, it follows a co-ordinated plan, a thousand years is but a day, an age, a civilization, as we know it, is but a phase upon the scroll of eternity, live out your part, even though its relation to the whole be less than the ripple to the sea, grit your teeth, take courage, you have your profession and father needs you.

(Enter Sandy and Mary, B. C.)

Sandy.

Isn't it splendid to find John so cheerful?

Mary.

John is gaining rapidly.

Sandy.

It makes me very happy.

Mary.

If Willie, our bad, bad boy, would only help, father would pull together much more quickly at that—oh! Willie, Willie.

Emily.

Will and Father will find their unity I'm sure of that.

William.

Unity that's a good name for it unite the broken pieces.

Sandy.

It's your duty boy, you owe it to your father.

Mary.

Remember the darkest hour, is always, just before dawn.

William.

Where is Dad?

Mary.

Aunt Polly is going to bring him down in a little while.

Sandy.

A great deal depends on you, William.

William.

On me, what can I do.

Sandy.

Make good.

William.

How can I make good, what do you mean?

Sandy.

I mean what I say damn it, make good.

William.

On what—I've lost.

Sandy.

Not yet.

William.

Oh! yes, I lost before I got started.

Sandy.

You've had a holiday, a kind of a spree, get to work.

William.

Work?

Sandy.

Yes, work, w-o-r-k.

William.

Work on what, my business is bankrupt, I've ruined my father, involved you his best friend, very badly, broken up the life of our home, get to work, I'll be jiggered, Ha Ha! He He! Ho Ho! I'm a peach.

Sandy.

You're a wonderful boy, you'll win yet, It's not all your fault.

William.

Uncle Mc, do you think there is, really and truly, any good in me. I could put a little bit of the blame on Tom, it was his darned fool idea, but I don't blame Tom poor fellow. He's all broken up. He's a good pal.

Emily.

Tom at least is at work.

William.

And I am.

Emily.

Floundering.

Sandy.

As a rule a parent's interest in a child destroys the point of view.

Emily.

Sure every mother thinks her baby has the brightest eyes.

Sandy.

And most men think that.

William.

Come to think of it, Father's superior business judgment should have warned him, that the idea wouldn't work.

Sandy.

Your Father's parental affection was so strong it overcame his judgment.

Emily.

Father knew your headstrong determination.

William.

Go to it, sis—I'm terrible, you are an angel Tony, painted wings on you.

Emily.

Don't ever mention that brute's name to me.

William.

Why call names, we spilled the beans.

Emily.

My ambition and experience has cost Father very little, and I'm going to make good.

William.

Going to do, that doesn't count, it's what we do.

Sandy.

Both of you have a good lesson, it's worth every cent it cost.

William.

I know my bubbles have all burst, and my castles have tumbled down.

Sandy.

Everybody blows bubbles, at some time in their life, rebuild your castle upon a rock.

William.

No mine would fall apart, my epitaph—luckless Bill.

Sandy.

Experience will give you a firmer foundation.

Mary.

My father's adage was, make haste slowly. He always said that.

William.

I've been pumped too full of sayings I should have been left to my doings.

Sandy.

Doings can be started any minute.

Emily.

Start today—start this minute.

William.

I can't see my way, I'm blinded with dust and choked with beans.

Emily.

Fight pay your debts.

William.

How, what with.

Emily.

Hard work, dig, the world's a gold mine.

Sandy.

It's digging that gets metal.

Emily.

It's all a play and it's got to be worked out line by line.

Sandy.

I wish you were my daughter, where's Tom.

Emily.

Fighting and pulling for dear life.

Sandy.

That's the stuff.

(Polly and John enter Polly rolling John in a rolling arm chair. Mary runs to and kisses John, Emily follows and kisses and pets John).

Mary.

Father is improving every minute.

Emily.

There (fixing pillows so as to make John comfortable) isn't that better.

John.

Won't you please put it a little to the side, that way, that's more comfortable thank you.

Sandy.

You'll be in the office now in a day or two.

John.

I'm terribly cold.

Emily.

I'll get some cover (she runs for it).

Sandy.

I love that girl, she's twenty carat.

John.

Did you ever notice how the twinkle in her eye, catches you just like her mother's.

Mary.

Now John quit that.

Emily.

(Returns and fixes cover.) There that will warm you a bit.

Sandy.

Cheer up, Aunt Polly, cheer up.

Polly.

I've missed the Red Cross now for twenty days.

Sandy.

I bet they missed you.

Polly.

I haven't seen Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab, either, I'm out of the orbit, one might as well be dead, as not know what the Stars are doing.

John.

I've been a beast to give all of you so much trouble.

Mary.

It's all right dear don't worry.

John.

I can't tell you how sorry I am I made an awful mistake.

Sandy.

Everything is for the best man, it's God's way and we shouldn't quarrel with destiny.

Polly.

Every time I think of those hot pork and beans, I have to laugh (she laughs hysterically).

Sandy.

It was hot stuff.

Mary.

Seasoned pork and,—it really does make one laugh (she laughs).

Sandy.

Peppered,—it would make a monkey laugh (he laughs).

William.

I don't see where the laugh comes in.

Sandy.

Honest.

William.

What's the joke.

Sandy.

You, can't see it.

William.

You aren't making a monkey out of me are you.

Emily.

It would make a brass monkey laugh (she laughs).

William.

Stop it—stop it, this has gone far enough.

Emily.

Can't you see the comedy of it, you silly boy (she laughs).

John.

Seasoned (he laughs). (Polly laughs.) Seasoned Pork and Beans Inc. (He laughs, Sandy laughs.) (They all laugh except William then he laughs) it was a whale of a joke, damned funny. How did it all come about.

Emily.

I have never known, how did it come about.

Sandy.

A trillion dollars got into the world, Tom saw it and William pursued it.

John.

All of us strong minded men and women, sucking eggs.

Sandy.

They all do it.

Polly.

Napoleon did it.

Sandy.

Caesar did it.

Polly.

And Alexander.

Sandy.

Hannibal did it.

Polly.

And Cromwell.

Emily.

And Antony.

Sandy.

And Cleopatra.

Polly.

And William.

Sandy.

See the company you are in, some association (they all laugh).

John.

It's alright, my boy, we'll start life anew, I am still a very young man, I am only forty-six—

Sandy.

That's the spirit, attaboy.

Mary.

Oh! I am so happy.

Emily.

Now for a real Smith family pull, altogether.

Polly.

I am going to see Micah Hab Dab, Hab Dab tomorrow.

William.

Dad I guess I've been all wrong, I should have had less thought of self and more of you and mother,—you see I'm pretty badly broken up,—I've got to find myself, God knows I want to do the right thing,—give me a little time to think, you see I'm pretty well jammed,—I can't reason very well, I've missed connection somewhere, and I don't know just where or how,—Can any of you tell me how a boy learns this thing you call living, —it's beginning to look pretty complicated to me.

Sandy.

Find good ground, get good seed, work all day and sleep all night, each human being has got to hoe out the row.

William.

Who wants to be a farmer, what does he get but seed?

Emily.

It's the simple life, and hasn't the complications you speak of.

William.

But a farmer never solves anything. He just studies the weather, and how to seed the ground.

John.

Yes, my son, there is much science in farming.

William.

All that a farmer ever gets out of life is a larger family than the ordinary family.

Emily.

Plenty of sunshine and peace.

William.

Rain and rot, I tell you it takes a lot of money to get anywhere in this world.

Sandy.

There you go again, you're money mad.

William.

What I can't understand Dad, is how a man knowing as much as you do, about the philosophy of life, the mechanics of it all,—fell for my foolishness, it seems to me you'd have known it wouldn't work?

John.

It is easily explained, you exploded this bomb on me, when I was very tired, when one fights one's life for a long time one gets very tired, your idea had the fire of youth in it and you carried me along in the frenzy of family love or admiration, parents as a rule believe in their children. We are swept off of our feet by the heart's desire.

Sandy.

Old hearts' desire has many sins to answer for. (An auto horn is heard very noisy.)

William.

Who in the dickens is that trying to raise the dead.

Emily.

The town must be on fire (enter Tom wildly excited gesticulating).

Tom.

Why wouldn't you come to the door to meet me, after me giving the chauffeur an extra dollar tip to blow the horn.

William.

What's the great noise about.

Tom.

Big, wonderful, tremendous news.

William.

Wonderful Tom what's it all about.

Tom.

I've lost my breath.

Emily.

You are worse than Ophelia's nurse.

William.

You'll be lucky if you don't lose your head.

Sandy.

(Excited) for God's sake man, tell us, what is it.

Tom.

(To Emily) I've gotten a manager to produce your play.

William.

Oh! Hell.

Tom.

You go to h-h-h-ades till I get my breath, and composure.

Emily.

My, but you are aggravating, if it's only the play why the excitement, it isn't worth it.

Tom.

The family is all right,—the family is alright.

William.

Have you gone plum crazy.

Tom.

Bill you will.

Sandy.

For the love of Annie Laurie, won't you tell us what it's all about.

Tom.

I've unloaded, sold our Pork and Beans.

William.

To whom, how much.

Tom.

England, France, three millions and over.

William.

My but you're a big liar, we never had that much to sell.

Tom.

How do you know what we had.

William.

Because I know, we haven't got that much stuff to sell.

Tom.

We had it all the same, I never liked a piker, I've made enough to pay all of our bills, and we must have at least a half million velvet.

William.

You're daffy, wheels, wheels, when they quit going 'round, wake me up.

John.

Why not give Tom a chance to give us details.

Mary.

My boy tell us everything.

Polly.

Hot pork and beans (she laughs hysterically), (Tom looks at Polly in amazement).

Tom.

Sure they were hot, you'd never eat them cold would you.

Emily.

(Laughing semi-hysterically.)

Please tell everything truthfully. What has happened.

Tom.

We had the goods, I never told Bill.

William.

What do you mean, you never told Bill.

Tom.

You'd have murdered me, you are entirely to conservative for a business man, you might make a lawyer.

William.

What are you talking about.

Tom.

Plain common sense, I'm a business man, you've got to have merchandise if you want to make a

sale, every order we decided to put on, or in, well I just make the order out for three times as much.

William.

Without my knowledge.

Tom.

Certainly—wasn't I secretary of the Company, an equal partner with you, didn't you promise to give me one-half of your stock for the idea, as Secretary of Pork & Beans, Inc., didn't I have rights not dependant on you, and not involved in penmanship, didn't I intend to feed the world on pork and beans, I should have been President of the Company.

William.

Well—well, what do you think of that.

Tom.

If I had listened to you, we would have been in a well, but I didn't, therefore we are free, with a lot of money, for a start, and the right to be happy, I had no trouble at all besides I'm a natural born salesman anyway.

William.

How did you turn the trick.

Tom.

Easy, I made connection with the British and French embassies convinced them I had the merchandise, they cabled London and Paris respectively.

William.

Their governments of course, anyone would know they would do that.

Tom.

Oh! Would they, I believe I could have gotten twice as much for our pork and beans, if I had waited another day.

Sandy.

Because they're seasoned.

Tom.

No, they don't want them seasoned, just plain old-fashioned pork and beans, they want them in a hurry for the army, to bad we haven't a bigger stock on hand, we could get rich right now.

Sandy.

Luck is a big element in life, think John, of a war being pulled off by the Kaiser, just at the right time to enable Tom to unload his pork and beans, without them being seasoned (he laughs) some luck.

William.

How much money have we made.

Tom.

Quite a bit, I tell you, don't you believe me, I haven't had time to figure it all out just to a cent, our debts will be paid in full and we'll have a good piece of lagnappe.

Polly.

What's a lagnappe.

Tom.

Mexican for velvet.

Polly.

Velvet.

Tom.

Plush, the soft, silky feeling you get, when you owe not any man, you look the whole world in the face, and tell them to go plum to hell, knowing you've got your meal ticket.

Emily.

You are terrible.

Tom.

Terrible anxious, terrible angel to make you terribly happy.

Emily.

I am terribly scared and worried.

Tom.

What are you worried about.

Emily.

About everything, you.

Tom.

Me, honestly, gee I'm getting on, but—I thought you'd be delirious with ecstatic joy, your play to be produced, the family troubles disposed of, what's the pressure.

Emily.

Maybe I ought to be happy, I really am anxious to hear about the play.

Tom.

It's thrilling.

Emily.

These profits.

Tom.

Do you think I didn't make enough. Well, I do say.

Emily.

Do you think it exactly right to profiteer on the soldiers?

Tom.

Oh! Go on, they are not our soldiers.

Emily.

They are fighting our battles, giving their lives for our security.

Sandy.

Good for you my lassie.

Tom.

Washington is full of Captains of Industry, they are selling every thing to Europe, from shoe laces to battle ships, the Allies need the supplies, Uncle Sam will make so much money out of this war, he won't know what to do with his wealth, we'll be the richest nation on the earth.

Emily.

It isn't right or fair to prosper and fatten on the misery of others.

Tom.

You don't seem to understand, they have got to have our material, we are doing them a great favor to give them what they need.

Emily.

I know, but—if—

Tom.

There isn't any but or if to it, take our pork and beans, we happen to have this very needful and valuable merchandise, why shouldn't we get a good price for it.

Emily.

It's to horrible to contemplate.

John.

There is something in Emily's argument.

William.

Unless you have money to work with, what good can you do in this world.

Tom.

Now you've said something.

Sandy.

Unless you get it, in the right way, nothing that you do counts.

Emily.

Making a fortune, out of the blood, shed upon a battlefield is pretty sorry money.

Sandy.

It isn't a very good foundation for happiness.

William.

I can tell you one thing, being broke hasn't any smiles in it.

Tom.

This is academic discussion, we've got the money, nobody is going to vote to give it away.

William.

How much did you put in, *we've* got the money.

Tom.

I put in all the profits, do you get that Bill.

Emily.

It seems to me we ought to think of the boys, who are dying that we may live in peace.

Tom.

They are not our boys, besides we didn't get them in the mess.

William.

Europe's been in the war business for thousands of years.

Tom.

And always will be in it—it's the best little thing they do.

Emily.

That may all be true, nevertheless, we should be happy and content, if we get enough out of this sale to pay all of our debts, and quit at that.

William.

And than.

Tom.

But darling, what are you going to do with our profits.

Emily.

Give them to the Red Cross.

Polly.

That's right, for poor Belgium.

Tom.

You're joking, don't—

Emily.

I was never more serious in my life.

Tom.

Honest, lose all of this hard earned money.

William.

After all we've suffered.

Emily.

Money really means very little, it is a relative thing, no one ever gets enough of it, one person finds love in a violet, and another misses it in an orchid, we are seeing the verities of life laid bare in flanders field.

Tom.

You really don't mean to have me surrender all of my earnings.

Emily.

You said you loved me, you want me to be your wife, you swore you'd make any sacrifice.

Tom.

I will.

Emily.

You have my test, have we the capacity for sacrifice.

Tom.

Then you'll marry me.

Emily.

Yes.

Tom.

Why I'd give up the whole wide world for you.

Sandy.

What about the play.

Tom.

Coming home on the train, I met *our producer.* I told him the story of the play. He's going to put it on at once.

Emily.

How could you tell him the play, you've never heard a line of it.

Tom.

Is that so, I know every line in it.

Emily.

How can you.

Tom.

I swiped your manuscript one day, and had it copied, I memorized every line, I made up my mind to be the bridge in the Bridge of Tolls.

John.

(Getting up from his chair and starts to leave.) I am going to work today, it is still forenoon (looking at his watch).

Sandy.

I'll go with you John.

William.

I am going with you Dad.

John.

Going where, what's that.

William.

Back to the law, where I belong.

Mary.

Aunt Polly, let's go down town, and buy a big lot of yarn, I want to learn to knit.

Polly.

Hot pork and beans (laughs), seasoned (laughs), that's what I've missed in my life (laughs), seasoning (they exit).

Emily.

(Starts forward and sits down on an old fashioned cross faced settee.) Isn't it good to be alone.

Tom.

All alone after the crowd is gone.

Emily.

All alone.

Tom.

We've crossed the bridge of tolls.

Emily.

One of them, there are many.

Tom.

I know I can cross them all with your love and help, what is that out there?

Emily.

What.

Tom.

Oh! I see.

In the fairy land of the heart's desire, I see a bridge, I see (a shadowed picture is thrown of Tom, Emily and little ones).

Curtain.

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